

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28 APRIL 2014 AT 2.00 PM AT RETFORD TOWN HALL

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 - **A**

Councillor Chris Baron – Ashfield District Council - **A**

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 - **A**

Councillor Glynn Gilfoyle – Nottinghamshire County Council

Christine Goldstraw OBE – Independent Member

Councillor John Handley – Nottinghamshire County Council - **A**

Suma Harding – Independent Member

Councillor Pat Lally – Broxtowe Borough Council

Councillor Bruce Laughton – Newark and Sherwood District Council

Councillor Keith Longdon – Nottinghamshire County Council - **A**

Councillor Debbie Mason – Rushcliffe Borough Council

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

Bob Vaughan-Newton – Independent Member

Councillor John Wilmott – Ashfield District Council (Substitute for Councillor Chris Baron)

OFFICERS PRESENT

Jayne Francis-Ward – Corporate Director) Nottinghamshire

Keith Ford – Senior Democratic Services Officer) County Council

) (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)

Deputy Chief Constable Sue Fish – Nottinghamshire Police

James Molloy – Temporary Chief Finance Officer, OPCC

Nicola Wade - OPCC

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2014, 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 Rizwan Araf and Councillors Baron, Collins, Culley, Handley, Longdon, and McCulloch.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

4. WORK PROGRAMME

Keith Ford introduced the report. He and Suma Harding fed back positively from the recent regional Panel network pilot meeting organised by Frontline Consultancy.

RESOLVED 2014/006

- 1) That the work programme be noted.**
- 2) That Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Panel sign up to the supported regional network for 2014/15 at a cost of £500.**

5. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE

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

- crime had risen by 0.7% in the last financial year, largely due to an increase in shoplifting, violence and burglary. The Commissioner was confident that the measures introduced by the Force would address this, with the overall rise decreasing since the Summer of 2013. The Commissioner highlighted that national crime statistics had yet to be released but it was expected that approximately half of the forces nationally were likely to be experiencing an increase in crime, partly due to retail crime;
- the recruitment of more additional Police Officers and Police and Community Safety Officers (PCSOs) would be continued, but later in the year due to financial constraints. 75 applications had been received for the recent vacancies and 33 of these applicants were from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds which was a significant increase on previous application rates;
- Nottinghamshire and the other four forces involved in the A19 employment tribunal had agreed to appeal the judgement, following QC advice. The Commissioner had also sought a second legal opinion which again supported

an appeal. Further work was being undertaken about possible compensation sums;

- the Commissioner's Community Safety Fund would be operating for a second successive year. 63 applications had been received from various community and voluntary sector organisations. £350, 000 funding had been awarded from this Fund and a further £130,000 had been awarded for victims' services (to 32 organisations in total). The outcomes of these projects would help to deliver the priorities contained in the Police and Crime Plan;
- further discussions were being held in the Force about the need to improve performance around hate crime. Although incidence levels were low this could potentially be due to crimes not being recorded appropriately as hate crimes.

During discussions, the following issues were raised:-

- Members highlighted a breakdown in communication between Forces in the region which had led to a suspect being bailed to an address in Nottinghamshire at which he did not reside. The Commissioner underlined the ongoing commitment to collaborate and share information between the forces in the region. The Deputy Chief Constable was surprised and disappointed to hear of this incident and underlined that thorough enquiries were routinely carried out if suspects were arrested across force borders;
- Members queried how the Commissioner gained assurance that areas of concern, such as financial issues, were being addressed by the Force. They felt that the information in these update reports was not always in a form which enabled scrutiny by the Panel. In response, the Commissioner stated that he gained assurance from regular discussions with the chief officers in the Force, for example with the Deputy Chief Constable about financial issues. Members underlined that the Panel needed different types of information rather than extra information. The Commissioner said that he was happy to provide information in the format which Panel Members preferred and suggested that further discussions take place between his Office and the support officers to the Panel to agree a revised format. Members suggested that an executive summary highlighting priorities and key actions planned over the next six months would also be useful;
- with regard to the A19 judgement appeal, the Commissioner confirmed that the five forces were working together and using a single QC. It was difficult to quantify the potential compensation costs at this stage as the Police Federation and Superintendents Association were encouraging members to seek compensation even though they had not been part of the initial tribunal;
- Members queried the levels of confidence which the Commissioner had in the crime figures recently reported to South Nottinghamshire Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The Commissioner highlighted that the Home Office had asked the Home Secretary to look at crime figures and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) would be asked to look at Nottinghamshire's figures in the next few months. The Commissioner had

asked internal audit to also look at these figures and he was currently awaiting a report detailing the findings. The previous time the HMIC had looked at figures nationally they had found that Nottinghamshire's figures were 96% accurate. The crime figures which the Commissioner had quoted earlier in the meeting were up to 31 March 2014 and therefore these would have been more recent figures than those reported to the CSP meeting;

- Members felt that the use of percentages without actual numbers of crimes etc. made it more difficult to scrutinise performance. They highlighted discrepancies between the domestic violence figures within the report and those within a report to the County Council's Community Safety Committee meeting of 29 April 2014. The Commissioner felt that these discrepancies would be a result of County-only figures being reported to the Community Safety Committee whereas the figures to the Panel included the City area also. The Deputy Commissioner agreed to clarify this issue with County Council colleagues. Members also expressed similar concerns about sexual violence figures. The Commissioner underlined that sexual abuse figures had risen but he felt that this was due to investigations into historical cases, which he was committed to resourcing. He was pleased to see an increase in domestic violence and sexual violence reporting as he viewed this as an indication that victims' confidence in reporting such crimes had increased. This increase in reporting of domestic violence enabled the Force to better analyse the levels of repeat victimisation and serial perpetrators. Members requested feedback in six months' time about what difference the increased reporting levels had made;
- Members queried why crime rates continued to remain high in many Partnership Plus areas. The Commissioner expressed his disappointment with the lack of impact of the partnership working in those areas and the priority wards in the City. A review of work in those areas was currently being undertaken and the Commissioner underlined that more effective working was needed with funding for such work no longer as readily available as in the past;
- Members felt that the improved performance around sickness levels compared favourably to performance of Councils. With regard to the high proportion relating to stress/anxiety/depression, Members queried whether this was due to pressure from managers. The Commissioner felt that this was not his perception but acknowledged that the Chief Constable's determination to implement an agreed set of values across the Force had resulted in some disciplinary action which had in turn led to some officers being absent with stress. The Deputy Chief Constable added that the Force had worked hard at improving attendance management with a robust but fair system implemented following training and briefings. Some managers in the past had tried to be friends with their officers and had avoided difficult conversations about performance as a result. The proportion of sickness due to such factors was in keeping with national public and private sector figures. It was not felt that the budget reductions had resulted in an increase in absence due to stress. The Force had commissioned the University of Nottingham to undertake a stress survey of Force employees and this had revealed that the stress being

experienced could be wholly, or partly, due to factors outside of work. The Force offered an external counselling service and was keen to support employees back to work wherever appropriate;

- Members welcomed the Commissioner's attendance at meetings of the County Health and Wellbeing Board and highlighted the issue of mental health and the links to crime. Both the Commissioner and the Force recognised this overlap, as illustrated by the two triage response cars operating since April 2014 with both police and community mental health officers. Feedback from Police officers was that this approach had made a massive difference. Also, the Force recognised that it was more appropriate to put people arrested under Section 136 offences into relevant places of safety rather than custody. Currently only two such facilities (with two beds each) existed - one in Queens Medical Centre and one in the old Kings Mill Hospital building. These units were not always fully staffed and the availability of beds was further restricted by the units having to be single sex. The Commissioner was in ongoing discussions with Health partners about this issue, although he underlined that the recent changes in the NHS around public health and commissioning had made progress of this issue more difficult. He also highlighted the utilisation of health care professionals with mental health backgrounds at the custody suite in Mansfield and stated that he would like to see similar resources available in the City. The Commissioner had made a £200,000 bid to the Home Office Innovation Fund to help address this overall issue. The Commissioner offered to arrange a presentation to a future meeting of the Panel on this issue and agreed to inform relevant District Councillors involved in the Health and Wellbeing Board;
- Members queried the current levels of usage of Victim's Personal Statements as these were proving very useful for magistrates and judges. The Deputy Commissioner stated that she was leading a task and finish group to look at the Force's response to the Victim's Code and recognised the importance of these Statements;
- Members queried the usage levels of the new 'Track my Crime' electronic facility. The Commissioner stated that not enough people were currently using this but underlined that it had not been strongly promoted initially until the Force was entirely confident that it fully worked;
- Members highlighted the rising levels of hate crime and queried whether this was particularly prevalent in certain areas. The Commissioner acknowledged that more needed to be done to address these crimes;
- with regard to the possible closure of Worksop Magistrates Court, Members underlined the possible increase in people not turning up for court and the resulting increase in workload for the Police in chasing up consequent warrants for arrest. The Commissioner stated that he and the Force were submitting consultation responses about this proposed closure. The Chief Constable had a national lead on this issue and the Force were seeking funding to explore the potential of virtual and digital courts.

RESOLVED 2014/007

That the contents of the update report be noted.

6. POLICE AND CRIME PLAN 12 MONTH MONITORING REPORT

RESOLVED 2014/008

That the progress made be noted.

7. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE UPDATE

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

- the recent HMIC inspections of Force responses to domestic violence placed Nottinghamshire's approach 'mid-table' nationally. The previous scrutiny review undertaken by the Police Authority had resulted in a number of improvements already being implemented. The inspection had highlighted differences in practice between the City and the County. The Force was already looking at implementing the recommendations from the inspection;
- the findings from the City and County commissioning reviews, which had involved a number of stakeholders and victims, would be shared with the Panel at a future meeting. The key finding from the County review was that most victims were very satisfied with the services they received;
- a Domestic Violence conference was being held on 13 May 2014 in order to highlight existing excellent practice;
- as previously mentioned, domestic violence reporting had increased. The importance of offering an appropriate response to match the increased expectations of those reporting such crimes was underlined.

During discussions, the following issues were raised:-

- Members raised concerns about problems in accessing safe houses and a lack of joint working between partner agencies in this respect. The Deputy Commissioner reported that the majority of refuges were owned by housing associations rather than being run by commissioned organisations. There was a lack of refuge places nationally and although the recommended number was currently available in the City and the County this may not remain the case if spaces are no longer commissioned. This situation was delaying access to refuge places, particularly if the person had children (and further complications were caused if the children included boys aged 16 and over). Other complications could arise if the people seeking places had drug or alcohol problems;
- Members requested further information in terms of targets for increased reporting;

- Members felt that different cultural issues relating to domestic violence needed further consideration, as highlighted in both the national and local inspection reports. The Deputy Commissioner confirmed that such issues were being addressed through the local reviews;
- with regard to the percentages included in paragraph 4.9 of the report, Members underlined that it would be useful to have actual figures as well;
- Members underlined the importance of mainstreaming new developments such as peripatetic workers and the mental health triage cars as soon as possible. Members highlighted some of the excellent preventative work being done with schools and colleges and the support being offered by District Councils in this work. The Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner recognised the benefits of improved inter-agency working and the Commissioner felt that partnership working with Health colleagues could be improved further.

RESOLVED 2014/009

That the report be noted.

8. COMMISSIONING OF VICTIMS' SUPPORT SERVICES

The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner gave a presentation highlighting the key issues including the current situation, nationally commissioned services, funding for Nottinghamshire, the research undertaken with victims, challenges faced and key milestones.

During discussions, the following issues were raised:-

- Members felt that some services, such as the Young Witness Service, could be better delivered locally rather than nationally. Nicola Wade explained that consultation about what would be included in the national tender had only recently been completed and it was unclear currently as to what would happen to such services;
- Members queried whether the funding available would enable the current level of services, such as those provided by Victim Support, to be maintained. Ms Wade stated that further details about costs had not been forthcoming, thereby preventing more informed discussions of costs. The Commissioner added that it had been difficult to clarify Victim Support costs and outcomes in Nottinghamshire;
- Members queried whether the existing providers in the City would be used. The Deputy Commissioner explained that the contracts would need to go out to tender and there were organisations in both the City and the County (albeit a limited number) that were likely to meet the relevant criteria. The Commissioner was committed to local people providing local services

wherever possible. Work would be needed with some organisations to enable them to bid for this work and briefing events were planned around that issue.

RESOLVED 2014/010

That the report be noted.

9. POLICING PRE-PLANNED EVENTS

The Deputy Chief Constable introduced the update report and highlighted the following key points:-

- the new practise aimed to address existing inconsistencies and potential liabilities. The Police were one of the partners in the District Councils' Safety Advisory Groups (SAGs) which considered smaller scale events. The Police only took the lead on national issues or events with potential security implications;
- the new approach was in line with the longstanding Association of Chief Police Officer (ACPO) guidance.

During discussions, the following issues were raised:-

- Members underlined the need for flexible partnership working with the Police around ad hoc events required at short notice such as celebratory homecomings for local athletes and teams. The Deputy Chief Constable underlined that this new practice was not inconsistent with such an approach;
- Members felt that better advertising of the support available to event organisers was required and that this should be published on at least an annual basis. The Deputy Chief Constable clarified that this information was published on District and Borough Council websites and agreed to feedback to the SAGs about the need for increased publicity. Advice and support was also available from commercial providers;
- Members queried the possibility of charging licensed premises a fee for police presence at events. In response, the Commissioner stated that Nottingham City Council was currently consulting on their Night Time Levy proposals but the District and Borough Councils had chosen not to pursue such charges.

RESOLVED 2014/011

That the report be noted.

10. COST COMPARISON OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

The Police and Crime Commissioner introduced the update report and invited Members to visit his new office at Gedling Borough Council. The move had been undertaken to reduce existing costs and to help in establishing the identity of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

RESOLVED 2014/012

That the report be noted.

11. COMPLAINTS UPDATE

Jayne Francis-Ward introduced the report and explained that the complaint received could not be dealt with by the Commissioner as it had been made by an employee of the Force. As such, the Commissioner had rightly referred this to the Force's Professional Standards Department.

RESOLVED 2014/013

That the details of the complaint received in respect of the Police and Crime Commissioner and his Deputy since June 2013 be noted.

12. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED 2014/014

That the dates of future meetings as follows be noted:-

Wednesday 18 June 2014	10.30am
Monday 15 September 2014	2.00pm
Monday 10 November 2014	2.00pm
Monday 5 January 2015	2.00pm
Friday 9 and/or 16 January 2015 am – Budget Workshop (non-public)	2.00pm
Monday 2 February 2015	2.00pm
Monday 20 April 2015	2.00pm
Monday 15 June 2015	2.00pm.

The meeting closed at 4.15 pm

CHAIRMAN
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