

**MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY 23 NOVEMBER 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

Councillor Leslie Ayoola – Nottingham City Council - **A**

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 Ayoola) – Nottingham City Council

Suma Harding – Independent Member

Councillor Rob Inglis – Rushcliffe Borough Council

Councillor Neghat Khan (substitute for Councillor Woodings) – Nottingham City Council

Councillor Richard MacRae – Broxtowe Borough Council

Councillor Francis Purdue-Horan - Nottinghamshire County Council

Councillor Helen-Ann Smith (substitute for Councillor Zadrozny) – Ashfield District Council

Bob Vaughan-Newton – Independent Member

Councillor Linda Woodings – Nottingham City Council - **A**

Councillor Jason Zadrozny – Ashfield District Council - **A**

OFFICERS PRESENT

Keith Ford - Team Manager, Democratic Services	}	Nottinghamshire County Council
	}	(NCC - 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

Kevin Dennis - Chief Executive, Office of PCC (OPCC)

Emma Foody - Deputy PCC

This meeting began on time at 2pm, however, there was a problem with the You Tube broadcast that meant the meeting was paused and recommenced at 2.30pm.

1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 7 SEPTEMBER 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2020, 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 were received from Councillor Carlton. Councillor Khan replaced Councillor Woodings, Councillor Edwards replaced Councillor Ayoola and Councillor Smith replaced Councillor Zadrozny, all for this meeting only.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All 4 independent members of the Panel declared an interest in Item 8, 'Independent Co-Opted Members' and undertook to leave the meeting when this item was discussed and that the Vice Chair would chair the meeting from this point onwards.

4. WORK PROGRAMME

Mr Ford introduced the report and reminded members that the National Police and Crime Panel conference had begun that day and would continue to run virtually over the next 2 days. Mr Ford informed the Panel that along with himself, the Chair, Councillor Smith and Suma Harding had all attended the morning session of the Conference which he had found useful and illustrative. Mr Ford informed the Panel that the Commissioner was also present at the conference, as a speaker, and had commented positively on the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Panel. Mr Ford stated that the Work Programme report was the usual one drawn up in consultation with the Commissioner's office and informed members that following discussion at the pre agenda meeting, it was intended to review the timings of the Priority Themes reports as the submission dates of these reports no longer co-ordinated with the PCC's Strategic Resources meetings as intended.

Following Mr Ford's introduction, the Panel raised the following:

- The Commissioner informed the Panel that the issue of '101' calls would be dealt with in his update report which was on the agenda for this meeting.

RESOLVED 2020/026

That the contents of the report be noted.

5. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE REPORT TO SEPTEMBER 2020

The Commissioner introduced the report and informed the Panel that crime levels before, during and after the pandemic lockdown were down. The Commissioner explained that the reason was straightforward; with people spending more time in their homes, burglary and shop lifting had reduced and the night time economy had shrunk significantly. The Commissioner informed the Panel that though the number of calls regarding domestic violence (DV) had gone up, the number of reports to the police both nationally and locally had remained approximately the same. The Commissioner also spoke about anti-social behaviour (ASB) and informed the Panel that the number of calls received had gone up and that most of the calls were from residents reporting incidents where the Covid restrictions were not being followed.

The Commissioner referred to the section of his report relating to the control room and spoke about the number of '999' and '101' calls received which had been going down. The Commissioner explained that a new system is now in place with training completed and that the change had gone well. The Commissioner stated that the pandemic had caused problems

in terms of staff shortages through illness and that the response rate had consequently been affected, but that there were myths circulating about this area and that he was happy to have a discussion around this service. The Commissioner referred to the ability of the Force to use technology from the national re-abling programme which aimed to allow more tasks to be completed on-line.

The Chief Constable informed the Panel that there had been 2 outbreaks of Covid in the control rooms but that the work undertaken to protect staff had been assessed as gold standard.

The Commissioner spoke of the Force's Missing from Home Team and informed the Panel that this issue was of national concern with research by Southampton University finding that each missed person equated to an average cost of £4.5k. The Commissioner emphasised the importance of the team's work and informed the Panel that particular attention was given to those who go missing on a regular basis.

The Commissioner informed the Panel that every neighbourhood inspector now had a Reacher Team and that his report contained figures on the work done by the various teams.

The Commissioner referred to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Review and informed the Panel that publication was expected at the end of November. The Commissioner informed the Panel that he thought there would be a section in the review devoted to panels and stated that he thought that panels were under-resourced, and that best practice needed to be rolled out. The Commissioner stated that he thought the forthcoming PCC elections were an opportunity for change when 40% of PCCs are expected to retire which should allow the relationship to Panels to be reset.

The Commissioner spoke about the capital programme and informed the Panel that the building of the new combined headquarters and the new custody suite were ahead of schedule, with costs reducing, while the building of the Sexual Adult Referral Centre (SARC), co-commissioned with survivors, was due to start in April 2021.

The Commissioner spoke of the national plan to replace the current Airwave communication system with a new Emergency Services Network (ESN). The Commissioner informed the Panel that he was part of the national discussions about the scheme which he considered far from satisfactory and which involved chief constables, other PCCs and the Home Office. The Commissioner informed members that there was no timetable or details of costs yet available and a considerable amount of work was still left to do. The Chief Constable informed the Panel that the Force was recruiting more staff to replace those that had moved on from this area to become officers but that the project remained a challenge.

Following the Commissioner's statement the Panel raised the following issues:

- The Panel questioned the Commissioner about knife crime. He confirmed that although the rates in Nottinghamshire were down, the rates regionally and nationally were increasing. The Commissioner informed the panel that knife crime remained a concern with challenges presented through coming out of lockdown. He spoke of the occurrence of knife crime in the Ashfield/Mansfield area being in a domestic situation and referred to a recent incident in Arnold. The Commissioner informed the Panel that he was due to meet the Shadow Home Secretary to discuss the reasons behind Nottinghamshire's good performance in the area of knife crime. The Chief Constable confirmed that the figures for Nottinghamshire were below the national average, which he considered a significant achievement and a result of the hard work put in by the Force in this area.

- The Commissioner responded to a question about the declining number of positive stop and search outcomes by stating that more people were being stopped as a result of concerns about knife crime and activity related to Operation Reacher. The Commissioner informed the Panel that the number of stop and searches had increased by 100% over the last 12 months meaning that it was inevitable the number of positive outcomes had reduced.
- The Panel praised the response of the local police to a recent incident in Stapleford and the Commissioner stated that policing was a tiered response with resources matched to the severity of the incident with the Force able to draw upon regional and national resources as appropriate.
- The Panel spoke positively about Operation Reacher and the Commissioner informed the Panel that the figures for Operation Reacher in the report did not include the Broxtowe area as the initiative had not been running in that area as long as some others. The Commissioner agreed with the Panel that positive coverage in the national Police Interceptors TV programme was welcomed and helped boost public confidence in the Nottinghamshire force.
- The Panel asked the Commissioner about proceeds of crime. He confirmed that only 10% of the proceeds went to the Police with the majority going to the Treasury. The Commissioner stated that the issue had a long history and it was one he was trying to change.
- The Commissioner undertook to examine the ASB figures and see if they could be broken down to separate out the Covid-related complaints.
- The Deputy Commissioner undertook to visit Hucknall and look into the concerns raised. She informed the Panel that a previously planned visit had had to be postponed because of Covid. The Commissioner confirmed that the old police station in Hucknall was on the market and that the date for offers had not ended. The Commissioner informed the Panel that the proposed health centre would not be on this site as another had been preferred. While any potential receipts from the sale of the station had not been allocated to any area, the Commissioner committed to look into whether any of the proceeds could be used in Hucknall.
- In response to a question about the Roads Policing Unit, the Chief Constable informed the Panel that there had been a recent HMIC report into roads policing. He said that the force had a good plan in place and though the unit was well resourced those resources would be increased.
- The Commissioner responded to a query about the forthcoming Police Commissioner elections and informed the Panel that both the Cabinet Office and the Electoral Commission had confirmed that primary legislation would be required for universal postal voting to be implemented. He stated that as this was not going to happen the elections would proceed normally on 6th May.
- The Panel referred to the use of CCTV and the Commissioner informed members that he had spoken to colleagues in the city and other districts and that his personal view was that local authorities needed to get together and discuss the equipment, some of which was 20-30 years old, and how it was used. The Commissioner stated that the equipment in

Mansfield was operated by Newark and though the Police benefited from the equipment throughout the County, they did not contribute to its cost.

- The Commissioner responded to concerns about incidents in the City and stated that while the focus had been on the arboretum area, a greater contribution generally was required from NHS partners to tackle the consequences of ill health, drugs and alcohol. The Commissioner referred to the recent stabbings in the City and informed the Panel that it was a live investigation. The Commissioner stated that although the numbers of stop and search was increasing the figure for positive outcomes was still the highest in the County and very few complaints had been received. The Commissioner encouraged people to write to himself or the force on the matter stating that learning could stem from complaints.
- Responding to a question about the use of drones the Commissioner informed the Panel that in the main they had been used for safeguarding and prevention, though recently a drone had been used to find a missing person. The Chief Constable confirmed that staff had now been trained and that the Force owned 3 drones – 2 of which were operational one of which was used for training. The Commissioner informed the Panel that no complaints had yet been received regarding the invasion of privacy but that this was a live issue and a report on drones would be brought to a future meeting of the Panel.

RESOLVED 2020/027

That the contents of the report be noted.

6. POLICE AND CRIME DELIVERY PLAN – THEME 4 – TRANSFORMING SERVICES AND DELIVERING QUALITY POLICING

The Commissioner introduced the report stating that given the time he would just respond to questions.

Following the Commissioner's statement the Panel raised the following issues:

- The Commissioner spoke of shared facilities and informed the Panel that although there were drop-in facilities for the public in East Leake and on London Road, generally the accommodation was used for welfare provision for officers as the Chief Constable wanted a visible police presence on the streets rather than officers behind desks.
- The Commissioner stated that regarding officer welfare he was happy to write a report if required and that the results of a recent survey of officers and staff had been good, though there was still work to be done.
- The Commissioner responded to a question about the new command and control system, called SAFE, which provided a more effective call handling platform and informed the Panel that although the new system was not functioning properly yet, staff were confident as they could see progress being made. The Chief Constable informed the Panel that he did not regard the new system as a problem and although it had not been possible to transplant all of the reporting tools of the old system to the new system, the Force was in a good position.
- The Panel spoke positively about the increased diversity in the workforce and the Commissioner informed members that the team deserved congratulations for achieving

figures that were one of the best in the country. The Commissioner stated that the aim was for the force to be the first one where its work profile matched that of the number of BAME residents in the community it served. He highlighted that there were still challenges ahead with the proportion of officers from an Afro-Caribbean background still very small.

RESOLVED 2020/028

That the contents of the report be noted.

7. COVID 19 COURTS AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE RECOVERY PLAN 2020-21

The Commissioner introduced the report and informed the Panel that he had been involved with work at a national level, speaking to the Lord Chancellor on the problems being faced. The Commissioner stated that the Deputy Commissioner had also been working in this area and handed over to the Deputy Commissioner to complete the presentation.

The Deputy Commissioner informed the Panel that Covid had had a significant impact on the courts with full capacity not possible because of the need to socially distance with the cases being heard primarily urgent ones or ones that were time sensitive. The Deputy Commissioner stated that cases due to be heard in Mansfield, Lincolnshire and Derbyshire had been transferred to Nottingham, increasing that court's backlog. The Deputy Commissioner informed members that video now played a large part in proceedings but that the extra resources required to operate in this way had to be found in-house as no additional funding had been made available centrally. It was noted that some cases did still have to be heard in person.

The Deputy Commissioner informed the Panel about other measures taken in addition to the use of video and these included the introduction of plexiglass screens, additional hours being worked and additional buildings being used as court rooms. The Deputy Commissioner spoke of the major challenges being faced as a result of the significant reduction in the capacity of both the magistrates and crown courts, a situation that had been exacerbated by the past closure of some of the estate, the reduction in the number of magistrates and the reduction in the number of magistrates' sitting days. The Deputy Commissioner informed the Panel that the backlog of cases primarily affected magistrates' courts but that the problem is working its way to crown courts.

The Deputy Commissioner spoke of the effect the current situation was having on victims, stating that ordinarily the process was daunting anyway, but the delays had meant that victims were now in the system for longer with more victims in the system at any one time. The Deputy Commissioner informed the Panel that the number of victims being supported was 6 times higher than normal with providers querying whether it was practical to move DV cases from Mansfield to Nottingham given the pressure on capacity. The Deputy Commissioner informed members that one victim had been waiting since 2018 for a court date, with some victims being at increased risk as a result of such delays. The Deputy Commissioner informed the Panel that similar problems were being reported by those supporting victims of sexual violence with waiting times for a court date doubled and adjournments increasing. This meant victims were being supported for longer, though they were not receiving the therapy they required while waiting. The Deputy Commissioner informed members that the situation was similar for those supporting children, with adjournments 7 times higher than normal and the toll on families exceptional. The Deputy Commissioner spoke of children who had been in the criminal justice system for half of their lives and though staff were dedicated, the delays were severe and the risks to children very real. The Deputy Commissioner referred to Nightingale courts which were

being used not just for criminal cases but for family and civil cases too, and informed the Panel that while 40 such courts were needed, only 17 were available and some had already closed. The Force had offered the use of Hucknall police station, free of charge, but the offer had not been taken up.

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

- The Chair stated that justice delayed was justice denied and asked for a further report to be brought to the February meeting of the Panel with the possibility of a representative from the courts attending.
- Mrs Harding reminded members that she was the only magistrate on the Panel and stated that she agreed with the Deputy Commissioner's comments. Mrs Harding informed members that from 7 December 2020, 3 magistrates would be in court allowing decisions to be made while remaining on the bench rather than having to retire for each decision required. Mrs Harding informed the Panel of other problems including the requirement to clean the court each time a person was brought in, the shortage of legal advisers, the problem of people not attending court and the difficulty of estimating how many magistrates were required, citing the example where some magistrates had to wait for 3 days before being called into court.
- Responding to a question about possible venues for Nightingale courts the Deputy Commissioner informed the Panel that she thought there needed to be more ambition nationally and spoke of the lack of communication about the available options. The Deputy Commissioner informed members that locally much work had been done in providing options, that there was knowledge locally about which buildings were suitable, that there was expertise available locally and that it was to be hoped that this would be taken on board and acknowledged nationally.
- The Deputy Commissioner undertook to check whether there was data available about the number of court cases being dropped this year compared to last year and to report back to the February meeting with the details.
- The Commissioner responded to a question about fines levied for breaching Covid restrictions by informing the Panel that nationally approximately half of the fixed penalty notices issued had been paid. The Commissioner informed the Panel that it remained to be seen how many of these outstanding cases would proceed to court and stated that one week previously he had been advised not to issue any more £10k fines. The Commissioner informed members that he had pressed for a fast-track fines system and the Ministry of Justice had agreed to look at such a system but in the meantime those going to court as a result of unpaid fines were adding to the courts' backlog.
- The Deputy Commissioner agreed that the backlog was a problem and that work needed to be done to ensure that justice was delivered. The Chief Constable informed the Panel that ordinarily traffic matters could be dealt with swiftly as only a clerk and one magistrate was required but that owing to lack of capacity there was also a backlog of such cases. The Chief Constable praised the Nottingham Recorder for getting the court Covid-safe so quickly but the system was centralised and old fashioned.

RESOLVED 2020/029

That the contents of the report be noted.

8. INDEPENDENT CO-OPTED MEMBERS

The 4 co-opted members of the Panel, Christine Goldstraw OBE, Lesley Dalby, Suma Harding and Bob Vaughan-Newton, left the meeting at this point and did not return.

Mr Ford introduced the report and reminded members that the matter was last considered in June 2019 when it was agreed to receive another report in late 2020. Mr Ford informed the Panel that while the length of a term was limited to 2 years, there was no limit to the number of terms an independent member could serve. Mr Ford stated that one advantage of the independent members was the continuity provided compared to Councillor members who were subject to regular elections.

Mr Ford informed members that they were being asked to choose between Option A and Option B. Mr Ford stated that if Option A was agreed, which was to extend the terms of office of the existing independent members, then the Panel would also need to decide whether the length of that extension was for one year or two years. Mr Ford explained that if Option B was approved a recruitment process to the independent posts would commence with the existing independent members able to reapply for those posts.

Following Mr Ford's statement the Panel debated the available options:

- A one-year extension to ensure the recruitment process does not clash with the County Council election cycle.
- The difficulty of finding the right people favoured a two-year extension, which would also maintain consistency of membership.
- Start the recruitment process – the importance of employing the same people was overstated.

On a motion by the Vice Chair, duly seconded, it was:

RESOLVED 2020/030

That Option A be approved with the terms of the existing Independent Co-Opted members extended by one year to 31 May 2022.

The meeting closed at 4.19pm

CHAIR