

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2022 **AT 10.30am AT COUNTY HALL**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Christine Goldstraw OBE – Independent Member
Councillor David Ellis – Gedling Borough Council

Executive Mayor Andy Abrahams – Mansfield District Council
Councillor Scott Carlton – Newark and Sherwood District Council
Councillor Andre Camilleri - Nottinghamshire County Council
Lesley Dalby – Independent Member - Apologies
Councillor Kevin Greaves – Bassetlaw District Council
Suma Harding – Independent Member
Councillor Rob Inglis – Rushcliffe Borough Council
Councillor Mike Introna – Nottinghamshire County Council
Councillor Neghat Khan – Nottingham City Council
Councillor Richard MacRae – Broxtowe Borough Council
Councillor Matthew Relf (substitute for Councillor Helen-Ann Smith) - Ashfield District Council
Councillor Helen-Ann Smith – Ashfield District Council - Apologies
Bob Vaughan-Newton – Independent Member
Linda Woodings – Nottingham City Council

OFFICERS PRESENT

Jo Toomey – Advanced Democratic Services Officer	}	Nottinghamshire County Council
	}	(Host Authority)
Pete Barker - Democratic Services Officer	}	
Keith Palframan – NCC Finance	}	

OTHERS PRESENT

Caroline Henry - Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) - Remote
Craig Guildford - Chief Constable, Notts Police
Rachel Barber - Deputy Chief Constable, Notts Police
Sharon Caddell - Interim Chief Executive, Office of the PCC (OPCC)
Dan Howitt - Head of Strategy, Research, Information and Assurance, OPCC - Remote
Mark Kimberley - Interim Chief Finance Officer (CFO) OPCC and CFO Notts Police

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING HELD ON 15 NOVEMBER 2021

The minutes of the last meeting held on 15 November 2021, having been circulated to all Members, were taken as read and were confirmed, subject to the following amendment, and were signed by the Chair:-

- The figure on Page 8, bullet point 4 should read £550k, not £50k as stated.

2. MINUTES OF CONFIRMATION HEARING HELD ON 14 DECEMBER 2021

The minutes of the confirmation hearing for the post of Interim Chief Executive, OPCC held on 14 December 2021, having been circulated to all Members, were taken as read and were confirmed, and were signed by the Chair.

3. MINUTES OF CONFIRMATION HEARING HELD ON 24 JANUARY 2022

The minutes of the confirmation hearing for the post of Interim Chief Finance Officer, OPCC held on 24 January 2022, having been circulated to all Members, were taken as read and were confirmed, and were signed by the Chair.

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Lesley Darby (Independent Member) and Councillor Helen-Ann Smith (Ashfield District Council).

Councillor Matthew Relf replaced Councillor Smith for this meeting only.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor MacRae declared a personal interest as he is an ambassador for the Violence Reduction Unit, which did not preclude him from speaking or voting on any item on the agenda.

6. WORK PROGRAMME

Ms Toomey introduced the report and highlighted the following:

- Work on the draft timetable for meetings was ongoing and future Panel meeting dates will be confirmed at the March meeting of the Panel.
- There would be a presentation at the March meeting on the work of the Violence Reduction Unit.
- The date for the confirmation hearing for the Chief Finance Officer post in the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner was still to be confirmed.
- A report on the reorganisation of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner would be presented at a future meeting of the Panel.

RESOLVED 2022/001

That the contents of the report be noted.

7. PRECEPT AND BUDGET REPORTS 2022-23

Prior to the meeting the Panel submitted a number of questions in writing to the Commissioner regarding the budget. The Commissioner's written responses are appended to these minutes.

The Chair thanked all those staff in NCC and the OPCC for their work in assisting the Panel to understand the issues involved.

The Commissioner also thanked the staff involved before introducing the report and stated:

- The budget would allow the implementation of the Commissioner's vision of reducing the number of victims, increasing trust in the police and developing a stronger support network for victims.
- The budget was designed to enable the delivery of the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan, 'Make Notts Safe' focussing on where the need was greatest including on knife crime, violence against women and girls, vehicle crime and rural crime.
- Domestic abuse perpetrators programmes were in place
- Equipment and training to tackle rural crime had increased
- The Plan had a clear and robust performance framework in place
- Indicators were in place to measure the impact of the Plan and there were 12 specific ambitions to be achieved by March 2024
- Details of new and planned investment was within the Plan, all of which is completely achievable in the 3-year timespan
- The Plan was delivery-focussed with an emphasis on the frontline, which was what partners stated they wanted
- The budget would realise the aims within the Plan, including providing a 'ring of steel' round the county using ANPR; investing £1.5m in technology; providing support in schools to deal with issues of consent and misogyny; strengthening Operation Reacher by providing 24 more officers and 11 more fully equipped ANPR cars.
- There were 9 new officers to 'police the digital beat' with the Home Secretary being very impressed by the digital investigation unit when she visited the Force on 28 January 2022.
- There were 2 more officers working in the night-time economy area and a new knife crime inspector.
- There would be an announcement soon regarding the Violence Reduction Unit
- A new restorative justice service would be commissioned, working with partners to help victims recover and reduce reoffending
- The Plan would have a tangible effect on policing and needed the budget behind it to succeed

The Panel then questioned the Commissioner on the budget and **a summary** of that discussion is detailed below:

- Whilst recognising that resources were allocated based on an assessment of harm, the Panel wanted to understand the distribution of those resources across the force area, including the layering of support that was available to communities in different circumstances. The Panel was grateful for the reassurance that the Chief Constable was able to provide.
- The Commissioner spoke of the many planned efficiencies, some of which were listed to be achieved through bringing services back in-house. Panel members were concerned that the force may lack the appropriate skills and capacity to be able to deliver these services and whether those efficiencies could be realised. Members were reassured by the answers that were provided around staff that were already available and the direction of travel for the remainder of the projects.
- The Panel also had a number of questions about the reorganisation of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. It identified that additional budget for staffing had been included to support the revised structure and the increase in commissioning activity. As the formal consultation was still underway, the Panel had not yet received an overview of the changes that were proposed for the office. Whilst recognising that the staffing of the office was the responsibility of the Head of Paid service, the Panel requested reassurance at an appropriate time that the restructure would bring forwards an office that was modern, efficient, and structured to deliver.
- Panel members were interested to hear that there were some liabilities arising from Operation Uplift, which was provision for the incremental pay increases for police officers. It was previously understood that all costs would be covered by the Government grant.
- Panel members noted that the implications of keeping Newark Police Station open were not reflected within the budget but look forward to updates on negotiations at a future meeting and understanding the impact that would have on the budgeted position.
- The Panel questioned whether it would be appropriate not to increase the precept this year in light of the current increases in the cost of living. Members also asked about the impact any standstill would have on future years' budgets. The answers highlighted those areas that could not be delivered without the increase in precept and the level of shortfall this would bring in future years, which would not be recoverable. The Panel recognised that the increased precept was necessary to deliver the Commissioner's Plan and the impact on the ability to deliver the improvements to policing should the increase not be approved.
- The Panel expressed concern that the Government's policy of shifting the burden onto the Council Tax payer was regressive.
- The Panel was grateful for the Commissioner's comments around the consideration she had given about whether it was an appropriate time to ask for the full increase of the precept. Members also noted the challenges that would be faced in requesting additional funding to meet any shortfall if the Commissioner had not taken advantage of the full increase. The comments of Commissioner's Chief Finance Officer and his recommendations were noted.

RESOLVED 2022/002

That the increase in Band D Council Tax by £9.99 to £254.25 be approved.

8. POLICE AND CRIME PLAN – MAKE NOTTS SAFE

The Commissioner introduced the report and then responded to the Panel's questions:

- Incidents of anti-social behaviour were recorded but not classed as a key indicator.
- Those members of the community that wished to volunteer for the Speedwatch initiative would be encouraged as much as possible
- The aim of reducing violence against women and girls was a golden thread that ran through the Plan. The Commissioner stated she had had robust conversations with Ministers about short term funding in this area. Short-term funding meant that third sector organisations needed to spend a proportion of their time applying for funding rather than delivering services.
- Although the government had not made misogyny a hate crime, the Commissioner had spoken to the Chief Constable who was content with how the law was at present. The Chief Constable stated that the force had not amended its policy and that there were no plans to change the local arrangements that were in place, which he considered worked well.
- Combatting stalking was a local priority for the force with dedicated staff. The force recently received a letter from a victim praising the way it had dealt with their case.
- The Chief Constable confirmed there were no plans to increase the size of the off-road team, though a refresh of the bikes was planned to improve their ability both off and on the road. This was a dedicated team that targeted areas where there was demand; the Chief Constable stated that he was satisfied with the current provision.
- The first meeting of the Nottinghamshire Criminal Justice and Assurance Board had taken place; initial discussions were around subjects such as terms of reference. The CPS were not at the meeting but were due to attend the next one. The Commissioner stated she wanted to improve the working relationship with the CPS and was looking at where the 'pinch points' were in the system.
- An update on knife crime would be given at the next Panel meeting as part of the VRU's presentation.
- Throughout the plan there was a prevent/respond/support approach towards all crime including drugs. The Commissioner stated she had held initial discussions with Harm to Hope to organise a local drug response with the aim of developing a more robust approach.

- The Commissioner agreed that there was a need to continue to improve diversity in the force and in the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- Hard copies of the 'Make Notts Safe' plan are available from the Commissioner's office.

RESOLVED 2021/003

That the contents of the report be noted.

9. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE REPORT

The Commissioner responded to the Panel by stating that it was disappointing that the percentage of people who felt safe after dark had reduced. This was part of a national trend with the Sarah Everard case being an influence. Members were advised that more detailed analysis was underway to understand the cause of this reduction and identify possible actions.

The Commissioner stated that women have said that they feel most unsafe on public transport so a trial had commenced involving a police presence on public transport.

RESOLVED 2021/004

That the contents of the report be noted.

10. HOME OFFICE REVIEW OF POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS

Ms Caddell introduced the report stating that the publication of the review was imminent and that it should be possible to bring a report to either the next meeting of the Panel or the one after that.

The Panel's questions were then responded to as follows:

- At this stage the possibility of PCCs having to appoint a deputy was just a suggestion and not mandatory. The concern was about ensuring there was sufficient resilience; members were advised that the OPCC already had a succession plan in place.
- The force was not collaborating with the Fire Service at present but this had not been ruled out in the future – the force had learned lessons from previous collaborations.
- There was no indication about how, or whether, non-elected independent members would be affected by the Review.

RESOLVED 2021/005

That the contents of the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 12.23pm

CHAIR