

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2021
AT 2.00pm AT COUNTY HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT

(A denotes absent)

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 - **A**
Councillor Andre Camilleri - Nottinghamshire County Council
Lesley Dalby – Independent Member
Councillor Michael Edwards (substitute for Councillor Woodings) – Nottingham City Council
Councillor Kevin Greaves – Bassetlaw District Council - **A**
Suma Harding – Independent Member - **A**
Councillor Rob Inglis – Rushcliffe Borough Council
Councillor Neghat Khan – Nottingham City Council – **A**
Councillor John Lee (substitute for Councillor Carlton) - Newark and Sherwood District
Councillor Richard MacRae – Broxtowe Borough Council
Councillor Helen-Ann Smith – Ashfield District Council
Bob Vaughan-Newton – Independent Member
Linda Woodings – Nottingham City Council - **A**

OFFICERS PRESENT

Keith Ford – Team Manager, Democratic Services	}	Nottinghamshire County Council
	}	(Host Authority)
Jo Toomey – Advanced Democratic Services Officer	}	
Pete Barker - Democratic Services Officer	}	

OTHERS PRESENT

Caroline Henry - Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
Craig Guildford - Chief Constable, Notts Police
Kevin Dennis - Chief Executive, Office of PCC (OPCC)
Dan Howitt - Head of Strategy, Research, Information & Assurance, OPCC
Charlie Radford - Chief Finance Officer, OPCC

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING HELD ON 7 JUNE 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2021, having been previously circulated, were agreed as a true and correct record, and were confirmed and signed by the Chair of the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Khan (Nottingham City Council) and Suma Harding (Independent Member).

Councillor Edwards replaced Councillor Woodings (Nottingham City Council) and Councillor Lee replaced Councillor Carlton (Newark and Sherwood District Council), both for this meeting only.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

4. WORK PROGRAMME

Ms Toomey introduced the report and highlighted the following:

- The Annual Conference for Police (Fire) and Crime Panels would be held in person on 1st and 2nd November 2021. Panel members who would like to attend were asked to confirm this outside the meeting, indicating whether they wished to attend on one or both days.
- Phase 1 of the Home Office's Review of PCCs had been completed. Phase 2 was under way with the results due to be reported later in the year. It was not clear whether the outcomes of Phase 2 of the review would be ready in time for the Panel's next meeting in November 2021.
- Site visits to the new custody suite in Radford Road and to the new joint force headquarters at Sherwood Lodge were being arranged for Panel members.

RESOLVED 2021/016

1. That the contents of the report be noted.

2. That any members of the Panel wishing to attend the Tenth Annual Conference for chairs, members and officers of Police (Fire) and Crime Panels indicate their interest.

5. COVID 19 – COURTS AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE RECOVERY PLAN UPDATE 2020-21

Both the Chair and the Police and Crime Commissioner expressed their thanks to Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service for submitting the report to the Panel.

The Commissioner introduced the report and stated:

- That it was her aim to reduce the number of delays and adjournments.
- The establishment of the Nightingale Court and a planned trial blitz would continue to reduce the backlog.

- Police-led prosecutions had increased and the aim was for this to continue.
- The Commissioner reported building relationships with HMCTS' Head of Crime for the Midlands Region and holding productive meetings with other key members of staff from HMCTS.
- File quality remained an issue.
- She aimed to optimise use of CCTV and body worn video at first hearing stage and highlighted opportunities to continue using digital platforms to access court proceedings, which had proved effective during the pandemic.
- Her intention to set up a Local Criminal Justice Board for Nottinghamshire, further details of which would be included in the Police and Crime Plan following consultation with criminal justice partners.

During discussions the follow points were raised:

- The backlog of cases remained a concern, but it was felt the Panel had done as much as it was able to support the Commissioner. The Commissioner would continue to work to improve the situation.
- Members reported that delays in the family courts had resulted in additional expenditure for local authorities.
- Delayed cases was a national issue however it was suggested that the matter was complicated to tackle in Nottinghamshire as it was part of a regional Criminal Justice Board rather than having a countywide one.
- Phase 2 of the Home Office's review of Police and Crime Commissioners would look at the powers of PCCs and whether they should be broadened, which could give them greater influence over how courts are run.
- The membership of any new Local Criminal Justice Board would comprise senior justice practitioners and reflect national best practice. Any opportunities for Panel involvement would be considered once the Board's terms of reference had been agreed. The Board would not replicate the regional board and there would be an emphasis on transparency to ensure progress was being made.
- Members felt that the Courts service was not as transparent about its activity as other criminal justice partners, including the police.
- Members queried whether the former Nottinghamshire Local Criminal Justice Partnership could be reconvened.
- Over the previous 12 months, the burden of work in preparing for court cases had shifted from the Crown Prosecution Service to the Police as a result of changes in legislation.

- The Panel was assured that the Police was working hard on case file quality with a team of checkers in place and much work being carried out on the digital side, though there were capacity and security issues associated with the digital process.

RESOLVED 2021/017

- 1. That the contents of the report be noted.**
- 2. That the Chair would write to the East Midlands Regional Crime Manager for Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service to thank him for the Courts Service's input.**
- 3. The Panel's work around Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service be concluded, notwithstanding any support the Commissioner may require in the future.**

6. POLICE AND CRIME PLAN 2021-24 – DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The Commissioner introduced the report and highlighted the following:

- That she wanted to ensure her Police and Crime Plan was informed by the needs of Nottinghamshire's residents.
- The Plan would be brought to the Panel's meeting on 15 November 2021 for consideration.
- An extensive community listening exercise was underway. There was still time for residents to sign up to events and have their say.
- Emerging issues included the need to strengthen the response to rural crime and dealing with anti-social behaviour before it escalated.
- In addition to public consultation, the Police and Crime Plan would also take account of crime needs analysis.
- One of the recommendations within the report suggested nominating lead members representing the city and county to maintain regular engagement with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner as part of the plan development process.
- The Plan would be based around 3 themes:

1. Prevent

Including the use of specialist teams in schools, early intervention and tackling root causes of crime and anti-social behaviour, particularly where that is drug and alcohol related.

2. Respond

Prioritising those areas about which the community is most concerned and tackling issues through targeted operations and using appropriate technology, for example automatic number plate recognition, and tackling serious crime.

3. Support

Improving the support given to victims and the community so that residents felt safe, improving the public's confidence in reporting crime and considering options to work with colleagues in the wider Criminal Justice System.

- A performance framework would be developed to help track progress against the Plan.

During discussions the following points were raised:

- In response to a question, the Commissioner confirmed she had replied to the correspondence dated 18 August 2021 regarding stop and search.
- The Commissioner had met with Kit Malthouse, the Minister for Crime and Policing and discussed the problem of grants that were allocated on an annual basis.
- The Commissioner hoped that the award of three-year grant would shortly be confirmed, which would fund the work of the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU). It was suggested that the Head of the VRU could attend a future meeting of the Panel and feedback on the work undertaken by the unit.
- Figures for the response times to answer 101 and 999 calls indicated that Nottinghamshire Police was one of the best in the country, though anecdotal evidence from some Panel members suggested that response could sometimes be slow. The order of the options given when ringing 101 was determined by the volume of calls for each category.
- Crimes could already be reported to the police online, with work on an app through which crime could be reported ongoing.
- The Chief Constable explained that anti-social behaviour could be reported to both the police and local councils; the co-ordination of a partnership response could affect its speed. He added that incidents of anti-social behaviour would not typically receive an immediate response from the police on the basis of threat, harm and risk.
- The force aimed to strike a balance between the number of uniformed officers employed and those officers engaged in investigating online crime at a time when that type of crime was increasing.

RESOLVED 2021/018

- 1. That the progress made be noted.**
- 2. That the Panel considers further the proposal of nominating lead members from the City and County to maintain regular engagement with the OPCC as part of the Police and Crime Plan process.**

7. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE REPORT

The Commissioner introduced the report and highlighted the following:

- All actions within her 90-day plan had been completed except the reorganisation of the Commissioner's Office, which was underway and being completed by an independent consultant.
- The 'Makes Notts Safer' grants had been launched – organisations could bid for grants of up to £10k for initiatives that would help deliver the Commissioner's priorities. Details of how to apply and relevant forms were available on the Commissioner's website. Completed applications needed submitting by 30 September 2021 with monies being paid to successful applicants in November 2021.
- Following a period of consultation, the next steps regarding Newark Police Station were expected to be announced shortly.
- Funding streams continued to be identified with successful bids made, including for the Safer Streets funding. Bids for further projects in areas of Nottingham city, Worksop and Ashfield were also in the pipeline.
- The recruitment of police officers continued, with the proportion of BAME officers at 7%, a 3.8% increase since uplift.
- The performance figures in the report related to the old Police and Crime Plan; a suite of measures was being developed in conjunction with the Commissioner's new Police and Crime Plan.
- Reported figures continued to show a reduction in crime overall but this was expected to change as lockdown restrictions eased. Key areas of concern were fraud and online crime.
- Nottinghamshire Police continued to focus on Operation Reacher and its proactive approach to drugs.
- There had been a rise in the number of first-time entrants to the Criminal Justice System.

During discussions the following points were raised:

- The rise of first-time entrants into the Criminal Justice System was the first in the last two to three years. This was partly attributed to decisions taken by youth justice managers to support those offenders who needed the wrap-around care provided by entry into the system.
- The announcement on the future of Newark Police Station was imminent.
- The Commissioner's emphasis was on the prevention of crime and work was ongoing with the Violence Reduction Unit, much of which was youth-led.
- The Commissioner noted the suggestion of a Panel member about opportunities to enhance services for witnesses and whether they could have access to case updates through the new victim care app
- The 17% increase in online fraud included both attempted and successful incidents. While the majority of those who lost money to fraud would report it, it was likely unsuccessful attempts would be reported. While success at handling fraud was increasing, it did not

match the increase in attempts. Online fraud cases were collated nationally and then allocated to forces.

- The Police funding formula was being reviewed nationally, with any changes expected to be implemented following the next General Election.
- Post lockdown, knife crime was increasing but so was the proactivity of the police. The increase was related to drug dealing and pent up demand but the figures for Nottinghamshire remained lower than the national average.
- The Multi Force Shared Service (MFSS) meant that the monitoring of accounts was problematic and errors in the data continue to be reported. From 1 April 2022 the Force was moving away from the MFSS. When fully operational the new system would save money and put in more effective controls than with MFSS.
- Members referred to hate crimes and racism directed to Afghan refugees on social media. The Panel was advised that the Police took the issue very seriously and encouraged anyone who saw such material to report it.
- Gun crime was increasing but the Force was catching those responsible through its proactive approach. Heavy sentences were anticipated with the Force using local and national intelligence to catch perpetrators.
- The monitoring and issue of firearms licences cost the Force approximately £12k each year. Individuals were required to provide information about their mental health.
- The Commissioner's Communications Team was working on a programme around electric scooters that would inform people which types of scooters could be used where.
- In response to a question about a specific incident, the Panel was advised that Nottinghamshire Police adopted a conciliatory approach to begging but instances of people fighting should be reported via a 999 call.

RESOLVED 2021/019

That the contents of the report be noted.

8. COMPLAINTS AND REVIEW ASSURANCE REPORT

Mr Dennis introduced the report and highlighted the following:

- This was the first report to the Panel since the Commissioner took responsibility for the oversight of complaints and complaint reviews in February 2020.
- The report focused on how complaints are dealt with - regular dip sampling was undertaken to establish if complaints were being handled in accordance with the guidance and legislation.
- Regular meetings were held to ensure that any learning from the dip sampling was being implemented.

- Extra staff had been employed as it was not clear what the demand would be.
- The system seemed to be working efficiently and compared well to other Forces.
- One area of improvement identified was around finalisation letters as some were unstructured, unclear or difficult to understand.
- The report had been presented and discussed at the Nottinghamshire Police Organisational Risk, Learning, Standards and Integrity Board and the Joint Audit and Scrutiny Panel.

During discussions the following points were raised:

- Why it took less time to resolve complaints where investigation was required (average 35 days) than those where it was not (56 days). The explanation related to the nature of complaints – for example, those complaints relating to matters including assault or excessive force were prioritised, and these were the complaints that were most likely to require investigation.
- A breakdown of complaints by type was available nationally but not locally. The most common complaints received were about the use of force, followed by the timeliness of some investigations and then incivility. There were very few complaints about corruption, which are usually reported by the police's own staff. Most complaints stemmed from the arrest/investigation process.
- In terms of officer morale, where a complaint required no further action, outcomes became about learning and not punishment. Further support for officers was available from well-being champions and the Force worked closely with the Police and Staff Association and the GMB union. Regular staff surveys, undertaken by Durham University, indicated that officers' satisfaction was improving. The University worked with 23 forces and Nottinghamshire ranked as one of the highest in terms of participation and officers' satisfaction. Officer attendance and morale in Nottinghamshire Police was good, helped by such factors as the success of Operation Reacher, the provision of good kit/equipment and the downward trend of crime figures.

RESOLVED 2021/020

That the contents of the report be noted.

9. THE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

The Chair thanked the Panel's support officers and colleagues in the graphics team for producing the draft annual report and asked members of the Panel to contact the support officers if any amendments were required.

Within the report, the section that looked forward referred to the Home Office review of Police and Crime Commissioners. A request for feedback which related to the review had recently been received; it had a deadline of 20 September 2021. A draft response would be prepared and shared with the Panel's Chair and Vice-Chair, then shared with the wider membership before submission.

RESOLVED 2021/021

That, subject to any changes requested by members, the Annual Report be finalised and published on the Panel's webpages on the Nottinghamshire County Council website.

The meeting closed at 4.15pm

CHAIRMAN