

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2023 AT 10.30AM AT COUNTY HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT

Christine Goldstraw OBE – Independent Member (Chair)
Councillor David Ellis – Gedling Borough Council (Vice Chair)

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

OFFICERS PRESENT

Keith Palframan – Financial Services Team	}	Nottinghamshire County Council
Manager	}	(Host Authority)
Jo Toomey - Advanced Democratic Services	}	
Officer		
Laura Webb – Assistant Democratic Services		
Officer		

OTHERS PRESENT

Caroline Henry - Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
Sharon Caddell – Chief Executive of the Office of the PCC (OPCC)
Gillian Holder – Chief Financial Officer (OPCC)
Dan Howitt – Head of Strategy and Performance (OPCC)
Chief Constable Kate Meynell (Nottinghamshire Police)
Deputy Chief Constable Steve Cooper (Nottinghamshire Police)
Mark Kimberley - Chief Financial Officer (Nottinghamshire Police)

1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 21 NOVEMBER 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 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

- Suma Harding (Independent Member)
- Lesley Dalby (Independent Member)

Councillor Stuart Richardson replaced Mayor Andy Abrahams for this meeting only.

Councillor Michael Edwards replaced Councillor Linda Woodings for this meeting only

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Richard MacRae declared a non-pecuniary interest because he was an ambassador for the Violence Reduction Partnership.

4. WORK PROGRAMME

Ms Toomey presented the work programme to the Panel. Ms Toomey highlighted the proposed dates for the Police and Crime Panel meetings for the 2023/24 municipal year.

RESOLVED 2023/001

1. That the work programme be noted.
2. That the following dates be agreed for the Panel's meetings in the 2023/24 municipal year:

Monday 5 June 2023 – AGM (already agreed)	2pm
Monday 25 September 2023	2pm
Monday 20 November 2023	2pm
Wednesday 24 January 2024 – Budget Workshop	10.30am
Tuesday 30 January 2024 – Budget Workshop	10.30am
Monday 5 February 2024 – Budget meeting	2pm
Monday 18 March 2024	2pm
Monday 17 June 2024 – AGM	2pm

5. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S PRECEPT & BUDGET 2023-24

Before the Police and Crime Commissioner presented her precept and budget proposal for 2023-24, the Chairman thanked the Commissioner and her team for taking the time to present to the Panel at the recent budget workshop and for also answering the questions which were sent to them in advance of the meeting. The

questions and answers are appended to these minutes. The Chairman also thanked officers from the County Council for their contributions.

The Commissioner presented her precept and budget proposal for 2023/24. In doing so she highlighted that the Police were facing the same financial pressures as residents and other public sectors. The Commissioner proposed an increase in the Police Precept of £14.94 for Band D properties for 2023/24 and highlighted her duty to ensure an efficient and effective police force for Nottinghamshire. It was noted that increases in cost were set against increases in demand.

The Commissioner concluded that the consultation undertaken by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner showed that residents of Nottinghamshire valued the role of the police and were sympathetic to the financial challenges it was facing.

The Chief Financial Officer for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner delivered a presentation to the Panel which outlined the gross budget requirement for 2023/24 for both the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable. The total net budget position of £261.7m took account of core grants and commissioning, efficiencies and savings, and specific income. The total net budget requirement for the OPCC was £6.9m. The net total budget for the Chief Constable was £251.8m. The net budget requirement also took account of direct revenue funding to the capital programme and savings achieved through the ceasing of the multi-force shared service for finance. Budgeted expenditure was shown against anticipated income.

The Chief Financial Officer explained that to fund the expenditure, the income required would be composed of:

- £154m core police grant announced by the government in December 2022
- Legacy council tax and pension grant settlement which had been in place for a number of years
- Ringfenced funding of £4.9m to support the police uplift programme
- A £0.3m surplus on collection funds
- £89.4m police precept
- £1.5m from reserves which was being brought forward to balance the budget

Members noted that £19m of budget pressures had been identified during the budget review, which related to staff costs, price increases and inflation. The Panel was informed that £4.7m of savings and efficiencies had been identified.

The Panel was reminded that the Commissioner had a statutory duty to obtain views on the precept proposal; in total approximately 4,500 residents participated in consultation. Consultation was conducted throughout 2022/23 as part of the Police and Crime survey, reaching a robust and representative sample across Nottinghamshire, a series of focus groups and an online poll. The OPCC Head of Strategy and Performance stated that on balance, across each consultation method, most people had supported an increase. He also highlighted the reasons people gave when supporting or not supporting an increase. A suggestion was raised that it would be possible to reach a broader range of people through going to district, borough and parish councils.

The Panel was informed that Nottinghamshire Police was currently funded as a medium size police force but lobbying was taking place to persuade the government that it should be funded more fairly.

Following the presentation, the OPCC agreed to supply detailed statistics from the surveys conducted broken down by the different districts in Nottinghamshire.

The Panel questioned the level of pressure placed on ministers for an increase in grants to reduce the pressure on residents to pay the increased precept. The Commissioner stated that she was currently working cross-party with Nottinghamshire's MPs and lobbying ministers for changes to the funding formula. She recognised that the policing area included a major city and highlighted that there were areas with high levels of deprivation.

The Panel asked questions about whether the new staffing structure for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner was delivering the expected efficiencies. The Commissioner stated that the quality of bids written by the new team was exceptional and gave an example of how it helped secure over £1m of funding to help children who had suffered from domestic abuse. The Commissioner also referred to the impact the new community engagement team was having.

Concerns were raised that the composition of the focus groups was not representative of the ethnic diversity, particularly of the city, which was stated as being 42.7% ethnically diverse. Members were advised that it would be difficult to ensure that the sample size for the focus group would be truly representative. It was noted that representation was achieved through feedback from over 1000 city residents who participated in the Police and Crime Survey

The Panel asked about the resource allocation of the police as some members felt that those who lived in rural areas were more likely to pay more but would see less police presence in their neighbourhood. The Chief Constable explained that the allocation of police officers was based on an assessment of risk of different types of crimes being committed in that area. The Chief Constable noted that the visibility of the police was important and that in addition to specialist resources to target specific types of crime, Nottinghamshire Police had force-wide resources which could be allocated across all areas of Nottinghamshire.

The Chief Financial Officer for the Force clarified the way in which full time equivalent police officers, which were published in the budget report, were estimated. The current uplift figure equated to a full time equivalent of 2,337 and would be maintained with monthly monitoring to ensure that this figure met by 31 March 2024. The impact of recruiting in cohorts on estimated figures was noted. The Commissioner clarified that it was unclear whether bonus payments for exceeding Uplift targets would be available in future years.

Questions were raised about the neighbourhood impact of Operation Reacher and the issues it was being used to address, with Panel members from different areas sharing their reflections. It was agreed that a report which reviewed the impact of Operation Reacher and neighbourhood policing could be provided at a future meeting of the Panel.

Members sought to clarify whether there were any grants that the Commissioner would be prevented from applying for if the precept was not increased by the maximum allowed. The Commissioner confirmed that there was not however it would affect her ability to lobby for additional funding. She added that she would continue to apply and bid for a range of grants and that there would be continued investment in the prevention of crime and lobbying for fairer funding.

The Commissioner highlighted that without increasing the precept to the £15 threshold set by the government, even with significant efficiency savings, reductions to front line support services would be required to achieve a balanced budget.

The Commissioner was confident that the efficiencies target of £4.7m would be met and highlighted that the target set for the 2022/23 financial year had been exceeded. The Chief Financial Officer for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner had also been tasked to present a long-term efficiencies strategy.

A statement was read by one member authority which did not support the 5.9% precept increase citing increased funding available for the police from central government, the cost of living and funding that could be brought forward from reserves.

In response to a question, the Commissioner stated that further investment in preventative work would ensure the force was able to provide continued support to those who were vulnerable and struggling financially during the cost-of-living crisis.

A vote was taken on whether the Panel supported the proposed precept increase. Ten members voted in support of the proposed increase whilst two members voted against it. Those members who supported the increase recognised the increased pressures that were faced by Nottinghamshire Police.

RESOLVED 2023/002

1. That the increase in Band D council tax of £14.94 to £269.19 be approved.
2. The panel be provided with an update report which would review the impact of Operation Reacher
3. The Panel be supplied with detailed statistics from the surveys conducted with a breakdown of opinions from residents from the different districts in Nottinghamshire

6. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS UPDATE REPORT

The Police and Crime Commissioner summarised her update report which covered her activities since September 2022 and highlighted the following:

- Making media appearances to engage with the public
- Partnership activity to promote Nottingham as a safe space
- Work around steering young people away from harm
- The Violence Reduction Unit had been renamed the Violence Reduction Partnership, with a recent event bringing together 100+ partners

- A provider had been appointed to deliver accredited youth work training to the voluntary and community sector
- The Divert Plus custody intervention had gone live
- Nottinghamshire had been awarded just over £1m from the Home Office Children Affected by Domestic Abuse Fund.
- A further £1.7m had been secured from the Ministry of Justice to support sexual and domestic violence support services
- To tackle the impact of misogynistic influencers there was a push on activities around consent and school visits exploring toxic relationships
- Preparations that were underway for the implementation of the new out of court disposals framework
- The Commissioner recently undertook the regional portfolio for Serious and Organised Crime
- Reviewing and reforming the way in which the victim care service worked so that all victims were automatically referred into Notts Victim CARE unless they requested otherwise.

Members of the Panel asked questions about the divert plus custody intervention programme and were informed that there were links between those who were referred to the programme and those not in education, employment, or training. Members also noted the overlap with speech and language needs not being identified at an early stage. The Commissioner added that there was a pilot programme at the Stone Soup Academy in Nottingham which would see the employment of a parent engagement officer who would act as a liaison between the school, pupils and the parents and would assist in helping to keep children in education.

Panel members raised concerns about the increase in First Time Entrants (FTE) into the Youth Justice System seen in both the City and County over recent months. The Chief Executive assured the Panel that this was being further explored in the context of out of court disposals and other outcomes that would prevent criminalisation. She added that there was work to be done by partners around early intervention and getting people the right support at an early stage.

It was suggested that Nottinghamshire Police could collaborate with positive male role models to mitigate against rising popularity of misogynistic social influencers who were widely acknowledged to have stimulated damaging discourse and attitudes amongst younger people. It was noted that the Commissioner was working with the youth commission, an independent advisory group of young people to gauge their views on the increase of misogyny. It was suggested that misogyny should be treated as a hate crime and that lobbying should continue for social media websites to amend the content that was allowed to be published.

The Chief Executive Officer provided the Panel with an update on the progression of a tender exercise which would see the implementation of a detached youth worker model which would be deployed in hot spot areas in Nottingham. It was anticipated that there would be three providers ready to commission from week commencing 24th March and a framework would be developed as quickly as possible to assist children and young people who were at risk of being impacted by serious violence and or exploitation.

The Commissioner stated that applications were open to apply for the rural crime grants and that applications would soon be open for community chest and innovation grants which had been built into the proposed budget for 2023//24.

RESOLVED 2023/003

The Police and Crime Commissioner's Update Report be noted.

7. PUBLIC TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN THE POLICE

The Head of Strategy and Performance delivered a presentation to the Panel which detailed an overview of trends in public confidence in the police and the activity underway to address the decline in public confidence both locally and nationally during 2022.

Key points raised during the presentation included:

- Public confidence measured by the police and crime survey remained stable until March 2020 when it increased however, since June 2021 public trust and confidence in the police fell.
- There was a 4.5% reduction in trust and confidence in the police compared to pre-covid statistics from those women and girls who were consulted. This was attributed to national news stories including the murder of Sarah Everard. Consequently, women were feeling less safe at night and believed that the police were not treating them with integrity and respect.
- South Nottinghamshire saw a 6.7% decrease in confidence and trust in the police and those consulted stated that this was due to the police not dealing with issues that were important to them and lack of visibility
- Those consulted in Mansfield and Ashfield saw a marked increase in trust and confidence in the police due to improvements around visibility, communications, Operation Reacher and the Police and Crime Commissioner's safer streets funding.

Following the presentation, members of the Panel were informed that police officers were working hard to keep residents safe despite the way the police were depicted in the media. Panel members spoken in support of the impact of the neighbourhood policing model and the opportunities it presented for improved visibility and engaging with hard-to-reach communities. They saw this as a key tool to help build confidence between the police and communities. Some members gave specific local examples of good practice and individuals who had made positive impacts to specific areas.

Concerns were also raised about the increase of assaults on police officers and whether this was any link between this and the lack of trust and respect.

The Panel commented that sometimes, despite residents making complaints about crime in their area, it took the police too long to respond which often resulted in more serious crime taking place and that this could be a reason public confidence in the police had decreased.

RESOLVED 2023/004

That the report be noted.

8. VETTING, MISCONDUCT AND MISOGYNY INSPECTION 2022

Members' attention was drawn to the inspection of vetting procedures by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services which assessed Nottinghamshire as 'good'. The Panel was advised that the Force had an action plan that was updated regularly so that the Commissioner could understand progress against required actions.

Reference was made to requirements for every police force to check all officers and staff against the national police database. This followed high profile national cases where serving police officers had been prosecuted for criminal behaviour. The Panel was pleased to hear that all data was gathered and was ready to be checked when instructed.

It was clarified that vetting of existing police officers had been paused to prioritise vetting of new recruits entering as part of the uplift programme. Despite priority being given to new recruits, Members were reassured that re-vetting for existing police officers and staff had continued around uplift work.

One member referred to a statement that had been made by the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police which raised concerns around the power to dismiss police officers. Reassurance was sought that the Chief Constable felt she had sufficient power to dismiss police officers and staff when necessary. Members noted that these procedures were being reviewed by the Home Office. However, the Commissioner was satisfied that Nottinghamshire Police made use of both powers, including a fast-track option, when required.

RESOLVED 2023/005

That the report be noted.

The meeting was closed at 1.03pm.