



NORTHUMBRIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

16 January 2018

PRESENT:

Gateshead Council	Councillors A Douglas and J McClurey
Newcastle City Council	Councillors A Ainsley and N Kemp
Northumberland County Council	Councillor S Davey
South Tyneside Council	Councillors G Kilgour and J Welsh
Independent Co-opted Members	Mrs J Guy and Mr S Isaacson

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria

Dame V Baird QC	- Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria (PCC)
R Durham	- Interim Chief of Staff
M Tait	- Chief Finance Officer
P Godden	- Head of Corporate Development, Northumbria Police

Gateshead Council

D Hill	- Legal and Democratic Services
B Wilson	- Democratic Services

APOLOGIES: Councillors C Burdis and T Mulvenna (North Tyneside Council), J Riddle (Northumberland County Council) and H Trueman (Sunderland City Council)

29. COUNCILLOR PAUL WATSON

It was reported that Councillor Watson had sadly passed away on 7 November 2017. The Chair had sent a letter of condolence to his wife and family, on behalf of the Panel and she summarised the letter she had received in response.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

30. CHIEF EXECUTIVE TO THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

The Police and Crime Commissioner reported that her former Chief Executive Elaine Snaith had left her role in December 2017 and she had appointed Ruth Durham as Interim Chief of Staff.

RESOLVED - That a letter of thanks for the commitment and support she has given to the Panel be sent to Elaine Snaith.

31. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the last meeting held on 24 October 2017 be approved as a correct record.

32. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Further to Minute 25(ii), the PCC circulated details of the stakeholders, etc that had been involved in the budget consultation process.

33. POLICE AND CRIME PANELS – CONSULTATION ON PROPOSALS FOR NATIONAL REPRESENTATION

Following concerns that the effectiveness and development of Police and Crime Panels have been restricted by the lack of a collective national voice, the Chair of Hertfordshire Police and Crime Panel, has co-ordinated discussions on the creation of a national representative body for Police and Crime Panels. The following three options have been suggested:-

(a) An independent national association.

(b) A special interest group within the Local Government Association.

(c) A combination whereby option (b) was considered as a stepping stone to option (a).

At the Police and Crime Panels national conference on 6 November 2017, attended by Councillors Kilgour and Welsh, the proposals for the creation of a National Police and Crime Panel special interest group within the Local Government Association and the setting up of a steering group to developing this further were agreed. Councillor Welsh volunteered to be part of the steering group.

A virtual forum of volunteers in which key points are established and discussed via e mail has been established and it is proposed that a meeting of all Police and Crime Panels to agree and finalise, on a one vote per panel basis, the details for a National Police and Crime Panel special interest group within the Local Government Association, including terms of reference, etc, be held in February/March 2018.

RESOLVED - (i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That Councillor Welsh represent the Panel on the virtual forum.

(iii) That further reports be submitted as appropriate.

34. FEEDBACK FROM NATIONAL AND REGIONAL EVENTS

Councillor Welsh reported that she had represented her Council at an interesting Westminster briefing on the new Government's plans for community safety and policing at which Northumbria's Police and Crime Commissioner was a speaker.

Councillors Kilgour and Welsh had represented the Panel at the Police and Crime Panels national conference on 6 November 2017. The conference had been very useful and it had highlighted how this Panel and Police and Crime Commissioner have a good working relationship which did not appear to be the same in other areas.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

35. HOME OFFICE PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON COMPLAINTS ABOUT POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS

The Home Office's report on the summary of the responses received to its public consultation, undertaken in December 2015, on complaints about Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and the next steps the Government proposes to take to change the system for non-serious complaints was presented.

The Panel considered the consultation document on 8 March 2016 (Minute 5) and an online response was submitted on its behalf. The PCC also submitted a response.

The changes to the complaints system for non-serious complaints made against a PCC that the Government intends to introduce were outlined in the document's executive summary.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted and further reports be submitted as appropriate.

36. COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER – QUARTERLY REPORT TO DECEMBER 2017

In accordance with the agreed procedure, an update report about the complaints and purported complaints against the PCC and every conduct matter recorded by the Monitoring Officer for the quarter ended December 2017 was submitted.

RESOLVED -

- (i) That the information be noted.
- (ii) That the arrangements for dealing with complaints against the Police and Crime Commissioner be undertaken by the PCC's Interim Chief of Staff through delegated powers under the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012.

37. THEMED REPORT – COMBATING CYBER-CRIME

Further to minute 27(i) – 2017/18, Detective Superintendent Barton gave a presentation on the Northumbria Police response to cyber-crime in line with the 2013 HM Government Serious and Organised Crime Strategy strands of Protect, Prevent, Prepare and Pursue. This provides for a structured approach to crime prevention, diversion of potential offenders, readiness/capability and bring offenders to justice.

The North East Regional Specialist Operations Unit has recently recruited a dedicated team to co-ordinate cyber protect and prevent work across the 3-force region and Northumbria Police has excellent connectivity with that team.

Protect - is crime prevention and this work is vitally important as bringing offenders to justice in a traditional policing context is not always possible due to the scale and nature of the criminality.

Prevent - is centred upon identifying those individuals who are at risk of being drawn into cyber-crime and engaging with them to divert them accordingly.

Prepare - is about ensuring that there is the necessary capabilities to respond to cyber-crime incidents and to provide those affected with effective criminal justice and victim support.

Pursue - is concerned with the arrest, detection and prosecution of those committing cyber-crime and within those investigations ensuring that any identified victims are safeguarded.

The Panel raised the following issues:-

Concern was raised regarding cyber-crime and teaching children how to be safe on the internet. The force Special Branch do a lot of work in schools etc as part of the prevent strand of the strategy to raise their awareness to make them safe and secure online. It was also suggested that parents should be involved to take more responsibility by activating parental controls, etc. The force is working with the Northumbria University on how to get this information to everyone and a parent pack to be used at parents' evenings and through the neighbourhood teams was being looked at. There was also advice available to the public on the get safe online website

It was asked when the cyber business breakfasts were to be held as Councils may be able to help in advertising them. Details were to be provided to the Members of the Panel.

The pilot in Sunderland to develop an improved approach to tackling cyber stalking and harassment once evaluated will be rolled out to other areas to try and embed the lessons learnt into normal policing.

It was asked if new hardware, etc could be developed to stop cyber-crime. There are companies doing this but those committing cyber-crime are continually looking to get around new systems and technology.

The force deserved credit for all the work it has done to combat cyber-crime. Businesses need to be made aware of the threats they could face and how to work to prevent them. Communication and education were very important in tackling cyber-crime.

It was suggested that devices should by default be made child safe so that settings would have to be changed to disable this.

RESOLVED - That the presentation be noted.

38. DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17

The draft Annual Report 2016/17 of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria was presented. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 specifies that a PCC must produce an annual report on the exercise of their functions in each financial year, including the progress made in meeting the priorities in the Police and Crime Plan.

It is the role of the Panel under section 28(4) of the Act to review the Annual Report and make a report or recommendations to the PCC.

The Annual Report includes an overview of the PCC's activities and achievements since 1 April 2016 and a full break down of year end performance summary has been considered by the Panel (Minute 54 – 2016/17).

The PCC's 2013-18 Police and Crime Plan, published in March 2013, provides the focus for the annual report. The new Police and Crime Plan 2017-21 was launched in April 2017 following extensive consultation.

The annual report will be available on the PCC's website and hard copies will be shared with Panel Members and key stakeholders.

Panel Members made the following suggestions for the Annual Report:-

It was suggested that Northumbria having the lowest precept of any PCC should be explained more on page 19.

In regard to the inspection grading - requires improvement on pages 23 and 24, it should be highlighted that action plans were in place and were being monitored.

RESOLVED - That the PCC be advised that in accordance with section 28(4) of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Panel agreed with the format and content of the draft annual report 2016/17, subject to the suggestions outlined above.

39. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER – PROGRESS AND UPDATE REPORT

The Police and Crime Commissioner presented her update report to the Panel which covered the following:-

Supporting Victims Fund 2018-19

National funding

Local funding

Purpose of the fund

Grant themes and funding priorities for 2018/19

Shaping the National Victim Strategy

The North East Race Equality Forum

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

PEEL Efficiency (including Leadership) – 2017 – overall judgement – GOOD

PEEL Legitimacy (including Leadership) – 2017 – overall judgement – GOOD

HMICFRS progress report on the police response to Domestic Abuse

HMICFRS Report – Stolen Freedom; the policing response to modern slavery and human trafficking
Bringing police officers closer to the communities they serve
Christmas 2017 Campaign – ‘Equip your kids’ – with cyber sense before they log on to their devices this Christmas
National Trading Standards - Scambassador

The Panel raised the following issues:-

Disability is one of the categories of hate crime. This is currently increasing and will be monitored. The biggest numerical increase in hate crime was following the recent European referendum.

It was asked if there were more examples of the PCC’s programme to make police officers accessible and close to the community they serve in all areas since she took office. The PCC replied that the opening police bases in the community had been undertaken as part of a detailed estates strategy.

It was queried how the PCC becoming a Member of Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority and the Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service would affect the Panel’s role of scrutinising the PCC and holding her to account. There was concern that there may be duplication with the scrutiny role of the Fire Authorities which also included Local Authority appointed Members.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the Police and Crime Commissioner’s update report be noted.
 - (ii) That the Local Government Association be asked if there was any guidance on the Panel’s role of scrutinising the PCC and holding her to account following her appointments on the above Fire and Rescue Authority and Service.

40. DELIVERY OF THE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN – APRIL – DECEMBER 2017: TARGETS AND PERFORMANCE

Paul Godden gave a presentation on the performance and target information relating to the delivery of the police and crime plan for April - December 2017.

The Panel raised the following issues:-

Concern was expressed that the neighbourhood team officers were being pulled out of their areas to attend incidents because of the urgent demand on 24/7 officers. It was replied that a review of how to better use and target resources to allow neighbourhood teams more time to work in their areas was being undertaken.

It was asked how long it would be before the call handling long term performance action plans would lead to a real improvement and was the PCC satisfied that the plans will work? The PCC replied that she was to scrutinise the call handling plans next month.

Satisfaction in regard to resolution without deployment was decreasing but it would increase costs if more deployments had to then be made. The PCC stated that it

may be because people were worried that the police were not taking their crime reports seriously enough. The standards and requirements for communicating effectively with the public involved were to be reinforced.

It was asked if the PCC was looking at the number of repeat anti-social behaviour victims which, although they had reduced by 30% during the period, were still higher than the comparative period. The PCC replied that the scrutiny panel was looking at this and improvements were planned.

Reference was made to the decrease from 91.9% to 82.4% in the victims of hate crime whole experience satisfaction measure. An internal inspection review report on the force's response to victims was being undertaken.

It was commented that there was also good local feedback on the work done by the police.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the information be noted.
 - (ii) That the PCC update the Panel following her scrutiny of the call handling plans next month.
 - (iii) That an update on the force's future response to victims following the internal inspection review be submitted.

41. POLICE GRANT SETTLEMENT 2018/19 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2018/19-2021/22

The Chief Finance Officer gave a presentation on the police grant settlement 2018/19 and medium term financial strategy 2018/19-2021/22 which included: headlines, provisional settlement written ministerial statement, what it means, central funds, threats and pressures, capital, precept considerations and next steps.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

42. KEY ISSUES IN THE NEXT QUARTER

The PCC advised the Panel of the following key issues she would be addressing in the next quarter:-

- Precept and budget setting and the medium term financial strategy
- Appointing a Chief Constable – the post was to be re-advertised with a closing date of 15 February 2018 and a stakeholders' panel was to be arranged before the interviews are held on 2 March 2018.
- Awarding the Supporting Victims Fund and launching the Commissioner Community Fund
- Expanding the Volunteers Strategy
- Violence against Women and Girls Strategy – 6 force strategy
- Lobbying and influencing the Domestic Violence Bill and the Ministry of Justice Victims Strategy, the Stalking Protection Bill and to respond to parliamentary inquiry as appropriate

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

43. THEMED TOPICS

The Panel considered the suggested themed topic for the meeting on 6 March 2018.

RESOLVED - That the accuracy of the crime figures, the causes of crime, the reasons for the increases in crime and volume crime and how this was being managed in Northumbria with reduced budget be agreed as the themed topic for its meeting on 6 March 2018.

44. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Monday, 5 February 2018 at 3.00pm