

NORTHUMBRIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

30 July 2019

PRESENT:

Sunderland City Council	Councillor M Mordey (In the Chair)
Gateshead Council	Councillors S Hawkins
Newcastle City Council	Councillors C Penny-Evans and K Webster
North Tyneside Council	Councillors J Mole and T Mulvenna
Northumberland County Council	Councillors R Moore and J Riddle
South Tyneside Council	Councillors A Strike and J Welsh
Independent Co-opted Member	Mr S Isaacson

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria

K McGuinness	- Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria
R Durham	- Chief of Staff
M Tait	- Chief Finance Officer
D Felton	- Temporary Assistant Chief Constable, Northumbria Police

Gateshead Council

S Ramsey	- Chief Executive
M Aynsley	- Democratic Services

APOLOGIES: Councillors A Douglas (Gateshead Council), D MacKnight (Sunderland City Council) and Mrs J Guy (Independent Member)

13. MINUTES

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the minutes of the last meeting held on 4 June 2019 be approved as a correct record.
 - (ii) That an update be given at the next meeting on the contributions from the constituent authorities towards the annual subscription for the National Association of Police Fire and Crime Panels.

14. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR NORTHUMBRIA

The Panel welcomed the new Police and Crime Commissioner, Kim McGuinness, to her first meeting of the Panel. The PCC stated that although she had been in office for only seven days her first week had been very busy. She had met the Chief Constable on two occasions and had been listening to the views of local people. She added that her approach would be to work with people in the local area and in partnership with the local authorities. She anticipated that this would be the start of good working relationships with all of these and that together a real difference would be achieved.

The PCC would be open and transparent with the Panel and she hoped that members would be able to help support her work as PCC.

The Chair advised members that this was a good opportunity to consider the future approach of the Panel. He hoped that members would be able to support the PCC and assist the PCC with the development of her priorities.

The PCC indicated that she was open to a more discussion led approach to the Panel's business and, in particular, consideration of the themed reports.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

15. THEMED REPORT – RAISING INVESTIGATIVE STANDARDS

Temporary Assistant Chief Constable David Felton gave an update on the Raising Investigative Standards (RIS) Programme, including why the RIS work was initiated, an overview of the main activity undertaken within the programme and progress to date.

A member asked whether there were any mechanisms in place to free up more specialist support 24/7 for vulnerable people. The Panel was advised that a lot of work was being undertaken on this area and this would be linked to demand.

Another member enquired about support for people with mental health issues who commit crimes. The Panel was informed that mental health triage work was undertaken which deployed mental health specialists to ensure these individuals were directed to the appropriate services.

The PCC stated that there were too many cases where emergency services had to deal with people with mental health issues rather than them being dealt with by the appropriate services. She had already raised this matter with the Chief Constable and discussions needed to take place with other sectors to ensure that these individuals were moved away from Police intervention and towards the services which could provide the necessary help and support.

The PCC was asked about possible involvement with Health and Wellbeing Boards. She indicated that this was an issue she intended to raise with the Boards in each local authority area.

The Panel asked to be kept informed of the development of the RIS work.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the information be noted.
 - (ii) That a further report be presented to the Panel meeting in December on the new operating model for RIS.

16. FEEDBACK FROM NATIONAL AND REGIONAL EVENTS

The Panel received an update from Councillor Welsh on her attendance at the Annual Police and Crime Panels Workshop on 11 July and the National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels (NAPFCP) meeting held the same day.

Councillor Welsh had just received the following papers and it was agreed that these should be circulated to Panel members:

- Minutes of the NAPFCP meeting held on 11 July 2019
- A paper on 'Police and Crime Panels – What Are They All About'
- A letter to the Policing Minister from the Chair of the NAPFCP

The PCC advised members that guidance had been issued by the Local Government Association for Police and Crime Panels on Policing and Fire Governance. It was also agreed that this document would also be circulated to members.

RESOLVED – That the above documents be circulated to all members of the Panel.

17. COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER – QUARTERLY ANNUAL REPORT APRIL TO JUNE 2019

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 between April and June 2018 was submitted.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

18. STATEMENTS OF ACCOUNTS 2018/19 AND THE EXTERNAL AUDITORS CONCLUSIONS

The 2018/19 Statement of Accounts were to be published on 31 July 2019 along with the External Auditor's Completion Report and opinion. They were prepared in line with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2018/19 and in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards.

The 2018/19 revenue budget was approved at £266.245m based upon:

- Increases in pay and prices of £7.500m; budget pressures of £2.900m and an increase in capital financing costs of £0.100m.
- Budget savings of £6.700m in 2018/19.

- A balanced budget with no planned use of reserves.
- An increase of £12 on the Council Tax precept in 2018/19.

The PCC delegated a budget of £256.801m to the Chief Constable for 2018/19 to enable the discharge of the activities under his control. The outturn position against the Chief Constable's revenue budget was £254.022m, reflecting an underspend of £2.779m.

The 2018/19 approved budget for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner was £2.061m, which included £0.750m for the Commissioner's Community Fund. The overall outturn position is £1.764m, an underspend of £0.297m.

The 2018/19 capital financing budget, which is under the PCC's direction, was £7.383m, comprising interest on borrowing and investments and the minimum revenue provision for repayment of borrowing. The outturn position of £7.022m reflected an underspend of £0.361m, primarily due to a reduction in planned capital spend, securing improved interest rates on new long-term borrowing, and additional investment income received due to the base rate increase in August 2018.

The PCC incurs expenditure on capital related items, including acquisition of fixed assets, building alterations, information and communications technology, vehicles and other major items of plant and equipment. The total capital investment for 2017/18 was £7.351m.

The General Reserves are a key strategic resource to assist with the management of the MTFs and meet unexpected costs. At 31 March 2019, the General Reserves were £9.728m, subject to any final changes as a result of the statutory audit. Based on the outturn, the PCC will be able to maintain the General Reserves at a level above the 2% minimum (£5.000m) threshold, in accordance with the reserves policy. Thus, enabling them to continue to support the MTFs as intended.

Regulations require public bodies to produce an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) that provides an assessment of the adequacy of the governance arrangements and their effectiveness. This separate statement accompanies the Statement of Account for each body. The PCC and Chief Constable Governance Monitoring Group have undertaken a review of the governance and internal control arrangements and have prepared an AGS for each body. These were reported to, and scrutinised by, the Joint Independent Audit Committee on 22 July 2019 and subsequently authorised by the PCC and Chief Constable. The process did not identify any weaknesses in the governance arrangements.

The audit of the Statements of Accounts and Annual Governance Statements for both the PCC and Chief Constable is now complete. The external auditor Mazars has issued an unqualified opinion, without modification, on both the Statements of Accounts. The unqualified Value for Money conclusion also confirms that both organisations have made proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in their use of resources.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the preparation of the 2018/19 Statements of Accounts and Annual Governance Statements be noted.
 - (ii) That the 2018/19 financial outturn position be noted.

- (iii) That the arrangements for the scrutiny and certification, leading to the publication of the final Statements of Accounts by 31 July 2019 be noted.
- (iv) That the issuing of an unqualified opinion, without modification on the Statements of Accounts and Value for Money assessments for both the PCC and Chief Constable be noted.

19. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 10 September 2019 at 2.00pm in Gateshead Civic Centre