



NORTHUMBRIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Virtual Meeting held on 20 October 2020

PRESENT:

Gateshead Council	Councillors A Douglas (Chair) and S Hawkins
Newcastle City Council	Councillors C Penny-Evans and K Webster
North Tyneside Council	Councillors J Mole and T Mulvenna
Northumberland County Council	Councillor J Riddle
South Tyneside Council	Councillor J Welsh
Sunderland City Council	Councillors D MacKnight and P Stewart
Independent Co-opted Member	Mrs J Guy

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 and Monitoring officer
M Tait	- Chief Finance Officer
A Pearson	- Director of Planning and Delivery
Chief Superintendent J Hutton	- Northumbria Police
Temporary Chief Inspector R Bosson	- Northumbria Police

Gateshead Council

G Morton	- Representing the Clerk to the Panel
B Wilson	- Democratic Services

APOLOGIES: Councillor M Swinburn (Northumberland County Council)

18. MEMBERSHIP OF THE NORTHUMBRIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Councillor P Stewart has replaced Councillor M Mordey as a representative of Sunderland City Council on the Panel.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

19. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

RESOLVED - That Councillor Stewart be appointed as Vice Chair of the Panel.

20. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the last meeting held on 20 October 2020 be approved as a correct record.

21. THEMED REPORT – ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Further to Minute 11 – 2020/2, Chief Superintendent Hutton and Temporary Chief Inspector Bosson presented an update on anti-social behaviour (ASB) in local communities and the Northumbria Police response.

Overall, ASB has increased by 68% during April to August 2020 compared to the same period the previous year with 33% due to Covid-19, especially during the lockdown period. There has been a 12% increase in ASB reports not linked to Covid-19. Reported ASB decreased when Covid-19 restrictions were eased but remained higher than pre-lockdown. Youth related ASB reduced by 26% but has returned to normal levels in recent months. Bank holidays and key Government announcements led to spikes in ASB during the lockdown period.

Response time, action taken and follow up satisfaction significantly improved for the 12 months to August 2020 compared to the 12 months to August 2019. Treatment satisfaction is consistently high with ASB victims treated fairly (98%) and with respect (99%). Follow up has most scope for improvement although follow up satisfaction was at the highest level since 2018.

A high volume of Covid-19 restriction breaches was reported online and the force is developing an improved reporting facility. Work is ongoing to understand what ASB now looks like following Covid-19. The focus of much of the operational activity is preventative and examples of the operations undertaken were outlined. ASB linked to the night time economy is the focus for many areas with operations running every weekend supported by partners throughout the force area.

In the public confidence survey in May, 54% of people were supportive of the force's response to Covid-19. Increased police visibility during the lockdown period received praise and a third of respondents wanted to see tougher police action to ensure public compliance with the restrictions. Speeding and young people engaging in nuisance behaviour were recurring themes in regard to neighbourhood ASB issues. A Covid-19 second wave public confidence survey was being developed.

The Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) Regulations 2020 came into force on 26 March 2020. Anyone contravening the requirements committed an offence punishable on summary conviction by a fine. The National Police Chiefs Council provided briefings to police forces in England and Wales with key messages and processes linked to regulations and fines. The force has set up structures for the oversight of the application of the regulations focused on engage, explain, encourage and enforce. A gatekeeper role allows scrutiny and oversight of

submissions on a daily basis to enable fast time reviews of enforcement activity linked to those who are potentially more vulnerable in the community. Weekly analysis on enforcement activity includes data which may be linked to disproportionality. An engagement strategy was implemented in March 2020 focused on Covid-19. Task forces throughout the force area work closely with partner agencies from the local authorities.

Since mid-September, the force saw more local enforcement mainly linked to the requirement not to participate in gatherings in households. The majority of the enforcement notices issued were Newcastle and mainly linked to students.

The future challenges and opportunities for the force in regard to ASB in local communities were outlined.

The Panel raised the following issues:-

There was concern that if the high volume of Covid-19 restriction breaches continued, particularly at public holidays, the area could be put into tier 3 of the Covid-19 restrictions. The police engagement teams were working closely with their local communities to encourage everyone to adhere to the current restrictions. There were also the additional budget requirements due to Covid-19.

It was asked if there were any patterns, particular locations, age or general concerns in regard to the significant 12% increase in non-Covid ASB. It was replied that the traditional issues for ASB were still there but there had been increased tensions relating to the lockdown with more people at home. The police continued to respond appropriately and work with the local Councils to address the issues.

Reference was made to youth disorder and the link to ASB after the lockdown and the local authorities youth services. It was replied that there was a decrease in youth disorder when the schools were closed, etc when adult ASB had increased. However, youth disorder was now back at its normal levels with the challenges of diversion, etc.

The satisfaction levels for how ASB reports were treated by the police was 99% but the public perception support for the policing response to Covid-19 was 54%. The police need to work on this as people's experiences can affect their perceptions. The police needed to emphasis all the work that was being done and the good results and partnership successes achieved.

The 10pm curfew introduced to the night time economy under the restrictions had displaced activity to the residential estates and the police were monitoring this.

The police were praised for Operation Oak carried out in the Jesmond area, which had made a big difference.

It was suggested that there had been more complaints because more people were working from home and their perceptions had changed and they were raising issues they may not normally have seen.

All the frontline services were thanked for their hard work and dedication during these very difficult and challenging times.

A Member also thanked his neighbourhood policing team for the excellent newsletter they sent out in his area.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

22. FEEDBACK FROM NATIONAL AND REGIONAL EVENTS

Councillor Welsh gave an update on the work of the National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

23. COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER – AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2020

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 Office in August - September 2020 was submitted.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

24. DELIVERY OF THE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN – QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT APRIL - JUNE 2020

The Panel considered the key performance areas and crime tables at force and local authority level relating to the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan for April to June 2020.

The Panel raised the following issues:-

The increase in domestic abuse incidents during lockdown and the Covid restrictions was concerning. It was asked if the police had adapted their processes to ensure the appropriate help and advice was being given. The PCC replied that she had weekly meetings with the force and officers were taking proactive actions to contact victims and link them to available services. The PCC was also working with groups, etc to support those at risk and had undertaken a joint campaign with the local Councils.

The rape conviction rate was disappointing when the charge rate had increased. It was asked if it had been investigated why the conviction rate was below the national average. The PCC agreed that the conviction rate was poor. She was working with the Local Criminal Justice Board to try and address this issue both locally and nationally.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

25. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER REPORT

The PCC presented her report which covered the following:-

Covid update
Fighting crime
Justice for heroes

Tackling ASB
Preventing crime
Violence Reduction Unit
Gang violence
Improving Lives
Grants
Monitoring the impact of victim services during the pandemic
Support in the workplace for victims and survivors of domestic abuse
Independent Custody Visiting
Upcoming issues

The Panel raised the following issue:-

It was considered that the Violence Reduction Unit had been very successful and the Government needed to commit to long term funding instead of the current piecemeal approach.

The update on the recruitment of police officers was good news and it was asked if there had been a focus on BME and women. The PCC replied that there had been but the numbers recruited still needed to be improved.

The webinar on criminal exploitation and serious violence had been excellent and well received. It was asked if the Newcastle based plans were to be rolled to all Councils in the force area. The PCC replied that the video of the event would be made available to other Councils, etc and rolling it out further would be discussed.

The justice for heroes action was fantastic and fully supported. The PCC replied there had been huge support and it was currently going through Parliament and they were awaiting the Government's response.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

26. POLICE AND CRIME PLAN CONSULTATION 2021-25

In accordance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the PCC submitted an outline of her emerging priorities for the Northumbria Police and Crime Plan 2021-25 and the supporting consultation process. Details of the Police and Crime Plan statutory framework and the shaping of the plan were outlined.

The PCC's policing priorities were fighting crime, preventing crime and improving lives. A two-month public survey, launched on 1 October 2020, asked people to rank their regional and local policing priorities, as well as providing demographic information. The public consultation was being promoted through paid-for advertisements, including in local media and the survey details had been sent to over 500 local organisations. Partners and stakeholders have also been asked to share the survey and to set out their organisation and their users' needs of the police and the criminal justice system. The PCC is discussing ways to widen the reach of the survey and use social media.

Large scale face to face engagement was to be included in the public consultation using the force's community engagement van but this was paused because of the Covid restrictions. Other engagement options have been considered as outlined.

The first step of the public consultation process closes on 26 November 2020. A further update on the consultation process will be presented at a Members' Advisory Group in December 2020. A draft Police and Crime Plan will then be shared with the public and stakeholders in early January 2021. A draft Police and Crime Plan for the Panel to review and make a report or recommendations, in accordance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, will be submitted to its meeting on 2 February 2021.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

27. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 8 December 2020 at 2.00pm