



NORTHUMBRIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

8 MARCH 2016

PRESENT:

Gateshead Council	Councillors G Haley (Chair) and J McClurey
Newcastle City Council	Councillor N Kemp
North Tyneside Council	Councillor T Mulvenna
Northumberland County Council	Councillors I Hutchinson and L Simpson
South Tyneside Council	Councillors A Smith and J Welsh
Sunderland City Council	Councillor H Trueman
Independent Co-opted Member	S Isaacson

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria

V Baird QC	- Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria
E Snaith	- Chief Executive
M Tait	- Chief Finance Officer

Gateshead Council

M Aynsley	- Legal, Democratic and Property Services
B Wilson	- Democratic Services

Northumberland County Council

J Bowie	- Head of Safeguarding and Strategic Commissioning
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APOLOGIES: Councillors G O'Brien (Newcastle City Council), C Burdis (North Tyneside Council) and P Watson (Sunderland City Council) and J Guy

1. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

The Panel has previously appointed J Guy and S Isaacson as its two Independent Members. Their term of office ends on 5 May 2016 and both of them have indicated that they wish to continue in their roles.

The Chair of the Panel, taking into consideration their contribution to Panel meetings, excellent attendance records and the benefits of continuity of membership, has indicated that he would support their re-appointment.

RESOLVED - That the re-appointment of J Guy and S Isaacson for a further term of office up to 7 May 2020, be agreed.

2. APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT CHIEF CONSTABLE

The Panel was introduced to the new Assistant Chief Constable, Darren Best.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the last meeting held on 2 February 2016 be approved as a correct record.

4. FEEDBACK FROM NATIONAL AND REGIONAL EVENTS

Three Members of the Panel were to attend the Local Government Association's Police and Crime Panel event in London on 14 March 2016.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

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

The above consultation seeks views on proposed changes to the complaints about the conduct of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs). It focuses on the complaints process for Police and Crime Panels when seeking to resolve non-serious (ie non-criminal) complaints made against a PCC.

Further to minute 5(ii) – 12 January 2016, the Police and Crime Commissioner's response to the document was provided to Members.

RESOLVED - That the Panel's response as discussed be sent to the Home Office by the deadline of 10 March 2016.

6. OPERATION DRAGOON AND ROAD SAFETY

Chief Inspector Heckels gave a presentation on Operation Dragoon and the risk management of dangerous drivers and criminal use of the roads. It included an explanation of the operation through education, engagement and enforcement, the history of two fatal collisions, risk management, reactive investigations, proactive targeting and case studies.

Members of the Panel raised the following issues:-

In response to a question on sharing information on the target suspects with neighbouring forces, it was replied that markers were included on the police national computer. Operation Dragoon has been seen as best practice and they had been asked to give presentations nationally and overseas.

It was asked if newly qualified drivers, particularly on rural roads, were considered under the standard risk. It was replied that this was part of the educational element to help them become responsible drivers.

It was commented that horse and carts on the roads can cause a lot of problems. Chief Inspector Heckels replied that there was legislation to cover this and the police carry out initiatives to combat problems.

It was asked if the police took action against pedal cyclists who do not use the cycle lanes provided and caused long queues of traffic. It was also suggested that the police could use head cams to stop cyclists and show them the recordings. It was replied that the police need to suspect that an offence has been committed before they could stop them. If they were riding dangerously they could be arrested. Other Members commented that there were dangers to cyclists in cycle lanes because of drains and as they were not regularly cleaned by the Councils they got a lot of punctures.

RESOLVED - That the presentation be noted.

7. TALKING TO THE FRONTLINE

Further to minute 8(iii) – 27 October 2016, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) gave a presentation on the feedback she received during her visits to the three area commands to meet police officers from all ranks face to face. The issues discussed included supporting victims (Victims First Northumbria), ambulance service and local authorities, body worn cameras, diary cars, safe crewing, mental health, anti-social behaviour and officer safety.

The PCC has taken away lots of their ideas and a few concerns and will work with the Chief Constable to better understand and address them where they can and see if more service improvements can be delivered.

Members of the Panel raised the following issues:-

Officers on pedal bikes used to be seen regularly on the streets in the west end of Newcastle, South Tyneside, etc and were excellent but they say they cannot be used now because the bikes were not serviced and they did not have any equipment. The PCC agreed to look into this to see if the police workshops could do the servicing, etc.

The issue of speeding motorbikes on the rural roads in Northumberland was raised and police cars not being able to catch them. It was replied that the Chief Constable disbanded the force motorbike section because of its costs. It is also too dangerous for officers and pursuit situations. There were also speed cameras and the automatic number plate recognition system that were used.

RESOLVED - That the presentation be noted.

8. OVERVIEW OF HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY PEEL (POLICE EFFECTIVENESS, EFFICIENCY AND LEGITIMACY) INSPECTION 2015/16

An overview of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) second PEEL Inspection of Northumbria final complete assessment published on 25 February 2016 was submitted.

The assessment of Northumbria Police was designed to give the public information about how their local police force was performing in several important areas in a way that was comparable both across England and Wales.

Findings were brought together to produce a rounded assessment which was published each year. In addition, for 2015/16, the force received a graded judgement for the core themes of effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy. HMIC also assessed forces on leadership as a factor underpinning all three themes and a narrative rather than a graded judgment was given. Details of each assessment were provided.

Members of the Panel raised the following issues:-

Reference was made to the HMIC's suggestion to introduce a community trigger policy in the stop and search scheme. This had never been used before and was a theoretical policy and was difficult to implement.

The PCC had been concerned about the HMIC's comments relating to the complaints triage system not conforming to the legal obligations on the Chief Constable. The triage system was being included in the Police Bill and the Police Federation and Independent Police Complaints Commission had fully supported the way it operated.

The HMIC's comments on the force's financial position were made before the 2016/17 budget was agreed. The police service was only being given one year's funding at a time.

Only a small number of forces had been rated by the HMIC as outstanding and it was asked if there was anything Northumbria could do to also achieve this. The PCC replied that the Chief Constable was aiming for excellent for dealing with vulnerable people and supporting victims and they were taking notice of all the other issues.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

9. NORTHUMBRIA SAFER ROADS INITIATIVE

The local authorities were concerned at the decision of Northumbria Police to withdraw from the Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative and it was requested that the issue be brought to the Panel.

The PCC considered that the Panel's role was to scrutinise how she governed the police but this was an operational decision and was, therefore, outside of the Panel's remit.

RESOLVED - That legal advice on the role of the Panel on the issue of the Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative be obtained.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 26 April 2016 at 2.00pm