



NORTHUMBRIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

24 October 2017

PRESENT:

Gateshead Council	Councillors A Douglas and J McClurey
Newcastle City Council	Councillor A Ainsley
Northumberland County Council	Councillor J Riddle
South Tyneside Council	Councillors G Kilgour and J Welsh
Sunderland City Council	Councillor H Trueman
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)
E Snaith	- Chief Executive
K Laing	- Head of Finance, Northumbria Police
H Murphy	- Business Intelligence Manager, Northumbria Police

Gateshead Council

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

APOLOGIES: Councillors N Kemp (Newcastle City Council), C Burdis and T Mulvenna (North Tyneside Council), S Davey (Northumberland County Council) and P Watson (Sunderland City Council)

15. MEMBERSHIP OF THE NORTHUMBRIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Councillor Angela Douglas has replaced Councillor John McElroy as a representative of Gateshead Council.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

16. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

RESOLVED - (i) That Councillor Angela Douglas be appointed as the Chair of the Panel for the remainder of 2017/18.

- (ii) That the Panel's appreciation and thanks to Councillor John McElroy for his work as Chair of the Panel be recorded.

17. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the last meeting held on 1 August 2017 be approved as a correct record.

18. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute 6 – the PCC has investigated the recruitment and retention rates for LGBT recruits. During the sifting and shortlisting stages there were an equal number of LGBT and non LGBT recruits dropped out and LGBT recruits performed better at the interview stage. She was reasonably satisfied with the numbers recruited and there was not a local problem. It is difficult to compare Northumbria's figures nationally as most forces did not record this information. The PCC's LGBT Advisory Group was to monitor this issue and a further progress report on the retention of LGBT recruits will be submitted.

19. FEEDBACK FROM NATIONAL AND REGIONAL EVENTS

There were no national and regional events reported.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

20. FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES IN ENGLAND

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 introduced a statutory requirement for fire, police and ambulance services to collaborate if it is the interests of each of their efficiency and effectiveness to do so. It also established two distinct routes by which PCCs can become directly involved in the governance of Fire and Rescue Services. The PCC could, subject to the approval of the Home Secretary, replace the existing Fire Authority. Alternatively, the PCC could be appointed as a voting member of existing Fire Authorities, subject to agreement by Fire Authority Members, in response to a formal request from the PCC.

The Local Government Association's guide for Police and Crime Panel Members on how Fire and Rescue Services in England are structured and governed and how they deliver services to communities was submitted.

The PCC reported that following her request, she has been appointed as a Member of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority and she has commenced the same process to join the Northumberland Fire and Rescue governance arrangements, part of the County Council.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

21. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER – PROGRESS AND UPDATE REPORT

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

Acting Chief Constable
Funding for victim services
Devolution of further victim services
Tyne and Wear and Northumberland Fire Services
Police Transformation Funding – Whole System Approach to Domestic Abuse
National Victim Work
Cyber Crime
Easy Read Police and Crime Plan
Northern Regional Dyslexia Conference
Disability Organisations
Age UK Transgender Group
Operation Sanctuary
Trauma Teddies
Work Place Domestic Violence Champions
National Police Database – Government Action Needed

The Panel raised the following issues:-

Operation Encompass where children who had been victims/witnesses of domestic abuse were given extra support and care by their schools was praised. The PCC reported that the operation has been extended to other local authorities in Northumbria following the successful pilot scheme in Gateshead.

It was commented that the PCC should keep pushing to become responsible for victims and witnesses through the criminal justice process as there were issues when they were referred from Northumbria Victims First to the criminal justice system. The PCC thanked her for her support.

It was asked what the timetable was for the appointment of the new Chief Constable. The PCC reported that following the advertisement, two applications were received but one of the applicants did not have the appropriate experience for the post. She decided not to proceed with only one candidate as she wanted there to be competition for the post. The vacancy will be advertised again in January 2018 to try and make an appointment in February 2018. The PCC was aware of other expressions of interest since the first advertisement. The Members of the Panel endorsed this approach.

RESOLVED - That the Police and Crime Commissioner's update report be noted.

22. DELIVERY OF THE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN – JULY – SEPTEMBER 2017: TARGETS AND PERFORMANCE

Helen Murphy gave a presentation on the performance and target information relating to the delivery of the police and crime plan for July - September 2017.

The Panel raised the following issues:-

Reference was made to the number of 101 calls where the caller after they could not get through had hung up and called 999 and got through. It was suggested that some intervention where the caller could ask to be phoned back by the police when they could should be introduced. It was replied that the customer services project was looking at how the community want to communicate with the police as part of a

review of current arrangements. A web chat was being introduced to improve communications.

It was asked how many crimes were not being reported because people were giving up after waiting long periods when phoning the police. It was replied that BT call takers can transfer waiting 999 calls to other emergency services but it was not the same for 101 calls. The PCC stated that she had concerns about calls not being answered and a report on how improvements can be made was being prepared.

Victims with a satisfactory needs assessment had continued to decrease from 83% in 2016/17 to 81% so how can the police respond to their needs. It was replied that the needs assessments and their value to victims were to be raised with officers and the monitoring arrangements on how the assessments were being undertaken were being reviewed.

There had been a 30% increase in repeat victims of anti-social behaviour and this often involved vulnerable people. The PCC stated that this had been identified and was being addressed.

There had been a 22% in the crime severity score, with the force placed 30th nationally, and a 23% increase in recorded crime so it appears that the force is not doing as well as other forces. It was replied that all forces were at different stages of implementing the Home Office Crime Recording Standards so it may be difficult to compare forces nationally. In a recent data integrity inspection, the force was second and third when compared to its most similar force group.

There had been reductions in the charge rates for rape, sexual offences and domestic violence and also in the conviction rate for domestic violence. The PCC was concerned about the reasons behind this and had requested a report on the issue.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the information be noted.
 - (ii) That the PCC update the Panel when the report on the charging and conviction rates for the offences outlined has been received.

23. COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER – QUARTERLY REPORT TO SEPTEMBER 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 September 2017.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the information be noted.
 - (ii) That the provision of details regarding compliments received by the PCC be investigated.

24. STATEMENTS OF ACCOUNTS 2016/17 AND THE EXTERNAL AUDITORS CONCLUSIONS

The Panel has previously been advised of the requirements for the publication of the draft Statements of Accounts 2016/17, public scrutiny and the audit process (Minute 10 – 2017/18).

Only minor changes were made to the draft Statements of Account none of which resulted in changes to the primary statements or the level of resources available to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

In accordance with the Home Office circular, 7 September 2017, the Police Pension Fund statement has been amended as outlined.

The audit completion reports set out the main findings of the work of the auditor, the unqualified opinion on the financial statements, the Value for Money conclusion and other comments. There were no outstanding matters or recommendations contained within the reports.

The Joint Independent Audit Committee considered and recommended the Statements and the Audit Completion reports on 18 September 2017.

The PCC, Chief Constable and the Chief Finance Officer signed the accounts on 19 September 2017 and the auditor certified them as completed on 19 September 2017.

The Statements were published on the PCC's and Chief Constable's websites on 29 September 2017 together with the Notice of Conclusion of the Audit.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

25. BUDGET SETTING PROCESS 2018/19

In February 2017, the PCC agreed the 2017/18 revenue and capital budgets and the 2017/18 – 2020/21 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

The force is reviewing the assumptions which underpin the budget and MTFS estimates in relation to central government funding for police forces, future budget pressures and inflationary increases and the capital investment priorities over the medium term.

Since the MTFS was agreed in February 2017, there has been a general election and continued political and economic uncertainty following the Brexit vote. UK economic growth estimates have slowed against those set out in the 2016 Autumn Statement and the public sector pay cap for police officers will be lifted from 1 September 2017.

During 2016/17, the Home Office reviewed the Police funding formula which determines how overall police funding is allocated between forces in England. It was intended to implement the revised formula for 2018/19. Although not confirmed, the expectation is that this will not now be implemented.

The process and timetable to set the 2018/19 revenue and capital budgets and complete the revision of the MTFs were outlined.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the information be noted.
 - (ii) That details of the stakeholders, etc that have been involved in the budget consultation process be submitted.

26. KEY ISSUES IN THE NEXT QUARTER

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

- Appointment of Chief Constable
- Prepare for the funding settlement process and also the Victims' Fund from the Ministry of Justice
- Press at a national level to support victims and also women offenders/out of Court disposals
- Work to influence the Domestic Violence Bill in Parliament
- Chair the Local Criminal Justice Board

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

27. THEMED TOPICS

The Panel considered the following suggestions for themed topics for future meetings:

Panel suggestions:

- Volume Crime /Increase in Crime
- Rural Crime

Previous Panel suggestions:

- Combating cyber crime
- Report on Operation Sanctuary

PCC's suggestions:

- Early intervention and partnerships
- Legislative changes for dealing with complaints against the Police
- Number of out of court disposals

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That combating cyber crime be agreed as the themed topic for the next meeting.
 - (ii) That the increases in crime and volume crime, the reasons for this and how this was being managed in Northumbria with reduced budget be agreed as the themed topic for a following meeting.

28. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 16 January 2018 at 2.00pm