

NORTHUMBRIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

24 April 2018

PRESENT:

Gateshead Council	Councillor A Douglas
Newcastle City Council	Councillor N Kemp
South Tyneside Council	Councillor J Welsh
Sunderland City Council	Councillors M Mordey and 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)
R Durham	- Interim Chief of Staff
M Tait	- Chief Finance Officer
R Snaith	- Interim Director of Commissioning, Engagement and Policy
P Godden	- Head of Corporate Development, Northumbria Police
C Wheatley	- Safeguarding Department, Northumbria Police

Gateshead Council

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

APOLOGIES: Councillors J McClurey (Gateshead Council), A Ainsley (Newcastle City Council), C Burdis and T Mulvenna (North Tyneside Council), S Davey and J Riddle (Northumberland County Council) and G Kilgour (South Tyneside Council)

58. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the Chief Constable's confirmation hearing and ordinary meeting held on 26 March 2018 be approved as correct records.

59. FEEDBACK FROM NATIONAL AND REGIONAL EVENTS

Further to Minute 33 – 2017/18, the first meeting to discuss the arrangements for the establishment of the Special Interest Group for Police and Crime Panels within

the Local Government Association (LGA) was held on 19 April 2018 in the LGA offices, London.

Councillor Welsh attended the meeting on behalf of the Panel and reported that it was agreed that it be called the National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels (NAPFCP). So far, 16 Panels had confirmed their commitment to be Members of the NAPFCP, terms of reference were agreed and a membership subscription of £500 for the first year was proposed. The Chair and two Vice Chairs of the NAPFCP were also appointed.

- RESOLVED –
- (i) That the information be noted.
 - (ii) That the Panel's commitment to the NAPFCP be agreed, in principle, subject to further information on NAPFCP costs being provided.

60. THEMED REPORT – UPDATE ON OPERATION SANCTUARY AND THE CURRENT ISSUES IN REGARD TO MODERN DAY SLAVERY

Further to minute 48 – 2017/18, Detective Chief Inspector Wheatley, Safeguarding Department, Northumbria Police gave an update on Operation Sanctuary and current issues with regard to modern day slavery and human trafficking.

Operation Sanctuary was a Northumbria Police led multi-agency operation which began in Newcastle in 2014 to target the criminal behaviour of men who committed sexual offences against vulnerable women and children.

In April 2015, Home Office innovation funding of £3.5 million was received to expand the Sanctuary victim team including additional social care and third sector resources, This was part of a two year project north and south of the Tyne to tackle and investigate perpetrators who commit / attempt to commit sexual exploitation and to safeguard and support vulnerable adults and children who are victims of or at risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE)/sexual exploitation (SE) and human trafficking.

Operation Sanctuary has been absorbed into the Force's Complex Abuse Investigation Unit and consists of an intelligence capability including prevention, offender activity and investigation as outlined. The investigation team investigates the most prevalent models of sexual exploitation with Northumbria Police and the offences of modern day slavery (MDS).

The victim teams comprising police officers, adult social care social workers and charities have established a community based hub with a victim focused approach to build on identified good practice. From 2018/19, the PCC's Supporting Victims Fund has supported Changing Lives and Bright Futures to deliver support services to victims.

The Home Office funding for Sanctuary ended in April 2017. Newcastle, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland children and adult services continue to support the victim team by funding their social care resources. North Tyneside and Northumberland attend weekly information sharing meetings. Bright Futures,

Changing Lives and Barnardo's have also obtained funding for their resource within Sanctuary.

The emergence of MDS investigations has placed further demand upon the Safeguarding and the Sanctuary team but the approach by Northumbria Police and partners has been recognised by the Anti-Slavery Commissioner as best practice.

Details of the number of referrals into Sanctuary and made to the agencies within the victim team, successful prosecutions and custodial sentences achieved and intelligence relating to CSE and MDS acted upon were outlined.

Northumbria Police and the safeguarding partnership recognise the signs and indicators of CSE/ SE and emerging trends and have a good understanding of its impact. Despite targeted activity and investigation this type of offending continues.

MDS forms part of Northumbria Police's control strategy and there has been an increase in reported offences. The Police are leading partners for training to raise the awareness and understanding of MDS offences. Local Authorities were considering their response to MDS and the Durham and Northumbria PCCs received funding for a modern slavery partnership event to engage partner agencies to better understand and tackle this emerging crime.

The force was to work with their partners and agencies and build on the preventative, disruption approach and its understanding and investigation of missing children which is inextricably linked to CSE.

MDS was still a relatively hidden crime. However, Northumbria Police and partners are well briefed on its signs and indicators and work together to deal with incidents and investigations when known. Northumbria Police, Local Authorities and safeguarding partnerships are establishing a joint MDS protocol for all agencies to ensure a corporate approach in dealing with victims, meeting their care needs and fully supporting them throughout an investigation.

The Panel raised the following issues:-

One of the Members stated that Bright Futures had done a lot of good work in her area and in schools. It was replied that the victims teams, consisting of adult social care, Bright Futures, Changing Lives and Barnados have all worked together to provide support to victims and there have been a lot of good stories about how well they have done.

It was commented that now that the Home Office funding for Sanctuary had ended and it had now been absorbed into the police budget, there was still a lot of hidden demand that the force would need to identify and investigate. Also, the increase in MDS was previously relatively unknown in this area. It was replied that the dedicated team was well equipped to understand and investigate these issues and there were now more force resources that could be brought in. The ethos of identifying and addressing CSE/CE and MDS was now embedded in the working of the force and there was also good partnership working.

RESOLVED - That the presentation be noted.

61. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER – PROGRESS AND UPDATE REPORT

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

Northumbria Local Criminal Justice Board
Modern Slavery Partnership Event
Police Transformation Fund – ‘Whole System Approach to Domestic Abuse’
Violence Against Women and Girls Transformation Fund
Domestic Abuse Health Advocates
Joint Diversity and Equality Monitoring Report and Equality Objectives
Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services Effectiveness 2017 Report
Social media – a new world of engagement
Responding to contact
National consultations and Inquiries
Hate Crime Victim Satisfaction
Connecting with our communities

R Snaith, the PCC’s Interim Director of Commissioning, Engagement and Policy reported on the PCC’s 2018/19 commissioning decisions and intentions. The PCC’s 2018/19 Supporting Victims Fund was launched in January 2018. Each bid received was assessed against published criteria. The Supporting Victims Fund grants awarded and other grants made by the PCC to ensure delivery of the Police and Crime Plan were outlined.

The victim services element of the grants programme that have been commissioned broadly fell into the five key themes outlined. The commissioning for the support services has ensured that those entitled to an enhanced service under the Victims Code of Practice receive that support and where possible are offered a choice of support services. This year, the grant agreement includes the new General Data Protection Regulations which come into force on 25 May 2018

The PCC’s Community Fund, which is about grass roots solutions to grass roots problems and concerns, has been launched today. The deadline for submissions is 20 May 2018. The Community Safety Partnership Managers and Neighbourhood Inspectors will be involved in the assessment of the applications to ensure projects with the potential to deliver the most benefit to local communities are awarded funding. Each application can be up to £2,000 and a report on the funding decisions will be presented to the panel at its next meeting.

The Panel raised the following issues:-

In response to a question, the PCC stated that although she did not agree with the HMICFRS’s assessment that the force’s approach to protecting vulnerable people required improvement, she was satisfied with the force’s action plan and that significant progress had been made.

Reference was made to the HMICFRS’s recommendations regarding the national shortage of investigators. The PCC replied that a proposal to bring back retired detectives to address the shortage was being considered and there was also a training course for non-police to become investigators.

The PCC agreed to report back to the Panel on the action plan to address the decrease in the hate crime victim satisfaction levels.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

62. POLICE AND CRIME PLAN – ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2017/18

The Panel considered the Police and Crime Plan annual performance report for 2017/18.

The Panel raised the following issues:-

Reference was made to the increase in call volumes for both the emergency and 101 calls. A national review and working group had been set up to look into the reasons for this and the force was reviewing its current systems. It was asked if the number of lost or dropped calls because of delays in answering them could be recorded by the police and this was to be investigated.

The whole experience satisfaction for resolution without deployment has been decreasing and it was asked if there were any issues with not meeting expectations and if there was any victim follow up. It was replied that there was ongoing training to improve the communication between the force and the victims to address this.

Concern was expressed that although the conviction rates for rape and sexual offences had improved, the charge rates had reduced. The force was currently investigating the reduction in charge rates. The PCC reported that this was due in part to the delays in awaiting Crown Prosecution Service charging advice on disclosure issues. The Home Office funded Sexual Violence Complainant Advocates will argue against disclosure issues for vulnerable victims.

Reference was made to the force being 40th nationally and 7th out of 8 in its Most Similar Force group for cutting crime. It was asked about the police resources used for vulnerable victims and whether enough resources were being directed to combat and detect volume crime, eg domestic burglary which can be very traumatic for victims and can make them vulnerable, and the public perception of the service being provided. It was replied that the force has retained a strong neighbourhood base and there were a large number of officers on the frontline providing a 24/7 response to tackle crime.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

63. COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER – ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 2017 TO MARCH 2018

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 2017 and March 2018 was submitted.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

64. KEY ISSUES IN THE NEXT QUARTER

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

General Data Protection Regulation issues
Chairing the Northumbria Local Criminal Justice Board
Police Transformation Fund, involving six forces – ‘whole system approach to domestic abuse
Police and Fire Collaboration group
Community Fund allocations
Domestic Abuse Health Advocates
Cybercrime Initiative in Sunderland
Responding to the Government’s Domestic Violence Bill consultation
Deputy Chief Constable Interviews
Providing evidence to the Home Affairs Committee on the police response to vulnerable young people
National Criminal Justice Board
Providing evidence to the Disclosure of Evidence in Criminal Cases Inquiry

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

65. THEMED TOPICS

The following issues have been suggested as possible themed topics for discussion at future Panel meetings:

- (a) How the police tackle volume crime including how they response to domestic burglaries, anti-social behaviour and violent crime and how the resources are balanced and managed to address volume crime and also meet the PCC’s priority of providing an enhanced service to vulnerable victims.
- (b) How the PCC and the police are working with their partners and Councils to tackle environmental crime.
- (c) How the local Community Safety Partnerships’ plans and priorities are considered in relation to the PCC’s Police and Crime Plan priorities.

RESOLVED - That (a) above be agreed as the themed topic for the Panel’s next meeting.

66. DATES AND TIMES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Tuesday, 31 July 2018 at 2.00pm
Tuesday, 30 October 2018 at 2.00pm
Tuesday, 15 January 2019 at 2.00pm
Tuesday, 5 February 2019 at 2.00pm
Tuesday, 5 March 2019 at 2.00pm
Tuesday, 23 April 2019 at 2.00pm