



NORTHUMBRIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Virtual Meeting held on 2 February 2021

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 M Swinburn
South Tyneside Council	Councillors A Strike and 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

Gateshead Council

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

APOLOGY:	Councillor J Riddle (Northumberland County Council)
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36. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the last meeting held on 8 December 2020 be approved as a correct record.

37. FEEDBACK FROM NATIONAL AND REGIONAL EVENTS

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

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

38. COMPLAINTS PROTOCOL

In accordance with the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012 and accompanying Home Office Guidance, the Panel is responsible for handling non-criminal complaints against the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and criminal complaints and conduct matters referred back to it by the Independent Office for Police Conduct. The only complaints that fall within the remit of the Panel are those which involve the personal conduct of the PCC.

The Panel has delegated part of its duties and powers under the Regulations to the PCC's Chief of Staff and Monitoring Officer. The Panel continue to have overall responsibility for complaints against the PCC and the Chief of Staff is required to report to the Panel on the use of the delegation.

Whilst the process has generally worked well and is regularly monitored by the Panel, it is recommended that the Panel agree a protocol on the management of unreasonable complainant behaviour as outlined.

The Panel raised the following issue:-

The proposed protocol was welcomed and it will be very useful for the Panel and the Chief of Staff when dealing with unreasonable complaint behaviour.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the unreasonable complainant behaviour protocol as outlined be agreed.
 - (ii) That the delegation to the Chief of Staff include the application of the unreasonable complainant behaviour protocol.

39. DRAFT POLICE AND CRIME PLAN 2021-25

The PCC's draft Police and Crime Plan 2021- 2025, which included the statutory requirements outlined in the Police and Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, chapter 3, section 7, was submitted.

The Panel's role is to review the draft Police and Crime Plan and make a report and recommendations to the PCC.

The Police and Crime Plan must include:

- The PCC's police and crime objectives
- The policing the Chief Constable is to provide
- The financial and other resources the PCC will make available to the Chief Constable to provide policing
- How the Chief Constable will report to the PCC about policing
- How the Chief Constable's performance will be measured
- Information about any crime and disorder reduction grants to be made by the PCC and any conditions made.

Public consultation has been undertaken through a variety of methods to allow for maximum inclusion despite the Covid-19 pandemic's social distancing restrictions

and lockdown rules. The views of nearly 6,000 individuals and organisations were collected by virtual means including survey, telephone consultation, social media campaign, focus groups, online question and answer panels and partner meetings. This was supported by extensive news media press releases and qualitative research via online engagement. Information on Open Labs work with the PCC will be presented to a future Panel meeting. In order to involve those without access to the internet, the PCC wrote to 100,000 households explaining how to take part in the survey, including by phone.

The localised data profiles will allow the PCC to ensure a more targeted and evidence-based approach to focus work in the areas with most need.

Over 1,600 young people were involved with the PCC's youth specific survey and the data will help deliver impactful interventions to the most in need communities.

Partner organisations completed the initial public survey and 135 written responses were provided by key organisations on their more detailed thoughts on policing. All key organisations were supportive of the draft Police and Crime Plan and its priorities, with some raising issues to be added.

Community Safety Partnerships, the PCC Advisory Groups and Victims Panel and the Police and Crime Panel have all been involved in the consultation process as outlined.

The Police and Crime Plan's links with the Northumbria Police performance framework, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services inspection findings, Northumbria Police Strategic Assessment/Force Management Statement, National Policing Vision and Strategic Policing Requirement and Victim services funding priorities were outlined.

The proposed Police and Crime Plan Priorities included in the draft plan were supported by the findings of the consultation exercise. This included support for a renewed emphasis on targeting criminals and those who commit anti-social behaviour, a preventative approach to crime fighting and for a continued focus on tackling domestic abuse and supporting victims of sexual violence.

The Panel raised the following issues:-

The draft Police and Crime Plan was an excellent detailed plan that covered a lot of areas. A good consultation exercise had been undertaken and the emphasis on anti-social behaviour and supporting victims was welcomed. The PCC confirmed that those affected by anti-social behaviour would be part of the wider work and support for victims.

The comprehensive plan covered a number of important areas including anti-social behaviour, and roads policing and speeding which were becoming increasing problems in Council estates. The PCC replied that this was a deliberate focus on preventative work to address particular issues.

The fluid plan was a good basis for the future which was not known. The focus on fighting and preventing crime was welcomed. It was suggested that political bias and comments against the Government should be left out of the agreed Police and Crime Plan and only relevant information and points included. Two Members replied

that because of the Government's policy on the funding of policing, it was difficult for this not to be a political issue and the effects of the force's budget cuts on its workforce, buildings, etc were outlined. The PCC stated that the plan was a forward-facing document for the future, the £140m cut in funding could not be overlooked and the Panel was considering the final draft of the Plan.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That a report be issued by the Panel to the PCC that it has noted and commented upon the contents of the plan and supported its objectives.
 - (ii) That the Panel will give support to the PCC and the Chief Constable to deliver the plan over the next four years.
 - (iii) That information on Open Labs work with the PCC be presented at a future Panel meeting.

40. PROPOSED PRECEPT FOR 2021/22

In accordance with the Police and Crime Panels (Precepts and Chief Constable Appointments) Regulations 2012, the PCC notified the Panel of the proposed 2021/22 Council Tax precept.

The proposed 2021/22 revenue budget and capital programme and a review of the 2020/21 budget position were submitted.

The Government will allow PCCs to increase precepts by a maximum of £15 per household, equivalent to 10.95% in Northumbria in 2021/22. However, the PCC is mindful of the financial challenge for many households in the last year. The PCC's proposal for 2021/22 is, therefore, to increase the precept by 4.99% (which equates to £6.84 per year for a Band D property). This will allow for an additional and recurring £2.708m to resources.

In order to address the increase in demand and complexity of investigations and to improve the quality of investigations, the Council Tax precept will be used to deliver an additional 60 police officer investigator posts in 2021/22, over and above existing recruitment plans and the uplift target set by the Government.

The PCC reported on the consultation on the proposed precept for 2021/22 that had been undertaken and 76% of respondents agreed they would support a 4.99% increase to the Council Tax precept.

The Panel raised the following issues:-

It was considered that funding the police service on a year to year basis was not adequate. The provision of funding on a longer term basis was required to enable future planning and funding arrangements for the police to tackle and prevent crime to be made.

Northumbria is the sixth largest force but has the lowest precept in the country. Whilst the PCC's proposed 4.99% increase in the 2021/22 precept was supported, Northumbria should not fall further behind other areas and consideration should be given to moving from the lowest precept in the future.

The PCC was making the best choice she could to increase the 2021/22 precept by 4.99%. The Government should be increasing police funding and not making the local communities have to pay more.

RESOLVED - That a report be issued by the Panel to the PCC that it accepts the PCC's proposed 4.99% precept increase which equates to £6.84 per year for a band D property.

41. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 16 March 2021 at 2.00pm