



NORTHUMBRIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

27 July 2021

PRESENT:

Gateshead Council	Councillor A Douglas
Newcastle City Council	Councillors C Penny-Evans and D Wood
Northumberland County Council	Councillors C Dunbar and C Horncastle
South Tyneside Council	Councillor J Welsh
Sunderland City Council	Councillors P Stewart and D MacKnight
Independent Co-opted Member	Mr A Shepherd

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria

K McGuinness	- Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria (PCC)
R Durham	- Chief of Staff
A Pearson	- Director of Planning and Delivery
M Tait	- Chief Finance Officer

Gateshead Council

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

APOLOGIES: Councillors P Maughan (Gateshead Council), C Burdis and C Johnson (North Tyneside Council), E Gibson (South Tyneside Council) and Mr J Klajn

8. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the last meeting held on 6 July 2021 be approved as a correct record.

9. ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

The Panel's draft annual work programme for 2021/22 was submitted.

RESOLVED - That the 2021/22 work programme be approved.

10. FEEDBACK FROM NATIONAL AND REGIONAL EVENTS

Councillor Welsh gave an update on the National Association of Police Fire and Crime Panels and the Local Government Association Police and Crime Panels Workshop held as a zoom meeting on 13 July 2021.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

11. COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER – APRIL - JUNE 2021

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 April - June 2021 was submitted.

The Panel raised the following issues:-

It was asked if PCC had a vexatious complaints procedure. The PCC replied that guidance was on the website and Part 2 of the review of the role of the PCC will look at how complaints were handled including vexatious complaints.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

12. DELIVERY OF THE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN – FIGHTING CRIME

The PCC submitted her first thematic report on fighting crime setting out the aims to support this core theme and updates on the work being undertaken in regard to the two priorities to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in the new Police and Crime Plan were given. Northumbria Police and Crime Plan core performance data was also provided.

The PCC reported that Part One of the Government's review into the role of PCCs regarding sharpening their accountability, visibility and transparency and considering their role in strengthening fire governance and progression of the Government's longer-term ambitions on mayoral devolution were now being implemented. Part Two of the review will focus on ensuring PCCs were equipped to fight crime, drugs misuse and anti-social behaviour. The PCCs' role in offender management and local partnerships, maintaining public confidence in policing and tackling crime and anti-social behaviour, will now be examined. All stakeholders were being consulted as part of the Part 2 of the review.

The Panel raised the following issues:-

There was concern that cyber crime was increasing and young people as well as elderly and vulnerable people were also becoming victims. The PCC had asked the force to look at cyber crime locally, nationally and internationally.

As anti-social behaviour was a problem in many parts of the region, the PCC was to create a new anti-social behaviour taskforce and work closely with the constituent Councils and other agencies to bring together all involved in making neighbourhoods safer and to empower residents to get their concerns acted upon. The PCC was to send out the required information.

Compared to the quite high public satisfaction rates with the actions taken by the police, public perception rates in regard to crime were much lower. The PCC replied that the force had the highest public confidence rates in the country. Work was being undertaken to address the public perception of crime issues.

It was asked how the Operation Checkpoint initiative was publicised and how people would be aware of who had volunteered to be part of it so that it did not undermine community spirit. The PCC replied that the scheme was publicised in the area and the volunteers, who had no warranted powers, had local knowledge of the area and were the eyes and ears who fed information to the police. Their identities were protected because of the serious criminality that may be involved. An explanation of the initiative was given.

It was suggested that the Government announcement that there would be a named police officer for each area would be unworkable because officers do not work all hours and their roles were regularly changed. The PCC replied that whilst she was looking into this, details of the local neighbourhood team were already given to victims of crime. The principles were positive but adequate resources would need to be provided.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

13. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

The PCC's draft annual report 2020-21 was presented. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 specified that a PCC must produce an annual report on the exercise of their functions in each financial year, including the progress made in meeting the priorities in the Police and Crime Plan.

It was the role of the Panel under section 28(4) of the Act to review the annual report and make a report or recommendations to the PCC.

The PCC's 2021-25 Police and Crime Plan was launched earlier this year and it will be refreshed on an annual basis. The draft annual report covers the PCC's current Police and Crime Plan and the end period of the previous Plan and it has been designed for online distribution.

Panel Members made the following suggestions for the annual report:-

Previous reports had been distributed differently but because of Covid-19 it would just be provided digitally. Hard copies were not being distributed but they would be provided on request. The suggestion that Council resources could also be used to distribute the message was supported.

An explanation of the understanding of local policing, which accounted for 40.4% of resource allocation, with neighbourhood teams and officers based on national methodology was given.

It was good to see that drugs and organised crime were to be tackled so strongly as these were problems in a lot of areas with young children being targeted and the police had done excellent work. The PCC replied that large crime organisations were involved and the police needed to disrupt and dismantle them. Also, young people needed to be diverted from this lifestyle and given better options.

The funding of the police service on a longer-term basis instead of the current year to year basis still needed to be addressed.

The PCC was praised for her excellent report.

RESOLVED - That the PCC be advised that in accordance with Section 28(4) of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Panel agreed with the format and content of the draft annual report 2020/21.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 19 October 2021 at 2.00pm