



NORTHUMBRIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

21 March 2023

PRESENT:

Gateshead Council	Councillors A Douglas (Chair) and P Maughan
Newcastle City Council	Councillor K Robinson
North Tyneside Council	Councillor T Mulvenna
Northumberland County Council	Councillor G Stewart
South Tyneside Council	Councillors J Foreman and J Welsh
Sunderland City Council	Councillors S Laws and P Stewart

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
K Laing	- Chief Finance Officer

Gateshead Council

A Simmons-Mather	- Representing the Clerk to the Panel
B Wilson	- Democratic Services

APOLOGIES: Councillors J Sathian (Newcastle City Council), C Burdis and C Johnson (North Tyneside Council), C Horncastle (Northumberland County Council), C Rowntree (Sunderland City Council) and Mr Klajn and Mr Kundi

33. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 7 February 2023 be approved as a correct record.

34. 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.

**35. COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER –
DECEMBER 2022 - FEBRUARY 2023**

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 December 2022 - February 2023 was submitted.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

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

The PCC submitted a 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 Police and Crime Plan. Northumbria Police and Crime Plan core performance data was also provided.

The PCC referred to the good, dedicated force that was keeping the region safe and proactively fighting crime. She also thanked the Council partners and her staff for their excellent work in tackling anti-social behaviour. There had been a 13% increase in emergency calls, call handler numbers had been improved and the 101 call waiting times had been greatly reduced. However, the force still had 485 less police officers than it had in 2010. The additional 134 police officers will be deployed to neighbourhood policing but there were significant financial pressures due to rising inflation and some Police and Community Support Officers will need to be redeployed to other duties. Greater Government investment in public services was needed.

The Panel raised the following issues:-

It was asked that the Northumberland area get the support it deserves as part of any restructure and modernisation plans for the force. The PCC would like to retain all the Police and Community Support Officers together with the new police officers. The excellent initiatives in the rural areas will be continued.

Whilst the additional police officers were welcomed, there was still concern that the lack of Government funding meant that Northumbria had 485 officers less than in 2010 when some areas had seen an increase in the number of police officers. Greater Government funding to increase the number of police officers in the force and retain the Police and Community Support officers was required especially as the area's population and the demand on the force had increased.

It was considered that the PCC and the force were doing the best they could within the difficult financial situation but more Government funding was needed.

The improvements in the call answering performance following the increase in the number of call handlers was commended.

RESOLVED - (i) That the information be noted.

- (ii) That the Panel's appreciation and thanks to Mr W Keenan for all his excellent work as Chief Constable of Northumbria Police be recorded.

37. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2023/24 TO 2026/27

The PCC's medium term financial strategy (MTFS) 2023/24 to 2026/27 was submitted. Kevin Laing, the PCC's Chief Finance Officer, gave a presentation on the purpose of the MTFS 2023/24 to 2026.27, financial year 2023/24, MTFS forecast, overview, key assumptions-budget projections, total funding and risks.

The Panel raised the following issues:-

Concern was raised about the use of reserves which because of the pressures on the budget cannot be replenished. The PCC was having to make difficult decisions within the current financial circumstances.

The force had only received a few hundred of the Government's 20,000 extra police officers and funding was only provided for one year at a time. Residents were being asked to pay more but the PCC was still having to make further cuts and use reserves. The PCC added that this area was the worst affected by austerity and all forces were having to compete for the limited additional funding available which was not an acceptable or sustainable situation.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

38. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2023/24

Tuesday, 6 June 2023 at 2.00pm
Tuesday, 25 July 2023 at 2.00pm
Tuesday, 24 October 2023 at 2.00pm
Tuesday, 12 December 2023 at 2.00pm
Tuesday, 6 February 2024 at 2.00pm
Tuesday, 19 March 2024 at 2.00pm