



NORTHUMBRIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

26 July 2016

PRESENT:

Gateshead Council	Councillors J McElroy and J McClurey
Newcastle City Council	Councillor J Robinson
Northumberland County Council	Councillor L Simpson
South Tyneside Council	Councillors G Kilgour and J Welsh
Sunderland City Council	Councillor H Trueman
Independent Co-opted Members	J Guy and S Isaacson

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria

V Baird QC	- Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria
E Snaith	- Chief Executive
M Tait	- Chief Finance Officer

Gateshead Council

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

APOLOGIES: Councillors N Kemp (Newcastle City Council), C Burdis and T Mulvena (North Tyneside Council), I Hutchinson (Northumberland County Council) and P Watson (Sunderland City Council)

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That Councillor J McElroy and Councillor H Trueman be appointed Chair and Vice Chair of the Panel for 2016/17 respectively.
 - (ii) That the Chair's suggestion that the Panel meetings should aim to be finished by 4pm and time allocations for items be included on the agenda be agreed.

2. MEMBERSHIP OF THE PANEL

The membership of the Panel for 2016-17 is as follows:

Gateshead	Councillors J McElroy and J McClurey
Newcastle	Councillors N Kemp and J Robinson
North Tyneside	Councillors C Burdis and T Mulvenna
Northumberland	Councillors I Hutchinson and L Simpson
South Tyneside	Councillors G Kilgour and J Welsh
Sunderland	Councillors H Trueman and P Watson
Independent Members	J Guy and S Isaacson

RESOLVED - That the membership of the Panel for 2016-17 be noted.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the last meeting held on 8 March 2016 be approved as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- (i) Minute 7 – Police Officers on pedal bikes had been seen back out on the streets and the Members thanked those involved for this.
- (ii) Minute 9 – It was reported that the issues in regard to the Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative had now moved on. The respective roles of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Chief Constable and the Panel were set out in the Policing Protocol 2011 and Members of the Panel were to be sent a copy of this for discussion at a future meeting.

5. FEEDBACK FROM NATIONAL AND REGIONAL EVENTS

Councillors Simpson and Welsh and S Isaacson had attended the Local Government Association's (LGA) Police and Crime Panel event in London on 14 March 2016. It was reported that the conference had been very interesting although there were a lot of substitute speakers who could not answer the questions raised but responses were to be provided to the delegates at a later date. The LGA's Good Practice for Police and Crime Panels, which this Panel had previously considered, was circulated as an aide memoir.

It was reported that the Fifth National Police and Crime Panel Conference was to be held on 20 October 2016.

There was an interesting discussion on resilience planning and how agencies, community facilities, etc could be protected by the emergency services.

Collaboration between the Police, Fire and Ambulance Services and possible mergers were also mentioned.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the information be noted.
 - (ii) That the LGA be contacted regarding the provision of further information from the conference.

- (iii) That the LGA's Good Practice for Police and Crime Panels be recirculated to Members.
- (iv) That details of the Fifth National Police and Crime Panel Conference on 20 October 2016 be obtained.

6. ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2016-17

The Panel's draft 2016/17 work programme was submitted.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the 2016-17 work programme be agreed.
 - (ii) That the Chair and Vice Chair meet with the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to discuss ways to enhance the Panel's scrutiny role.

7. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER – PROGRESS AND UPDATE REPORT

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

The Northumbria force election result
Commissioning Intentions 2016-17
Victims First Northumbria
Strengthening Specialist Victim Services
Commissioner's Community Fund 2016-17
Collaboration Joint Strategy Group – Fire Service
Launch of the East End Remote Evidence Centre
Change That Lasts Pilot
Working with Sunderland University
Working with the National Victims Commissioner
Working with Local Authorities
Monitoring delivery of the Police and Crime Panel
Burglary Dwelling
Work Place Domestic Violence Champions
Engaging with local communities
Ensuring appropriate use of volunteers in policing
Armed Officer Recruitment
Psychoactive Substances Act
Building the Police and Crime Plan 2013-18
Lobbying and shaping the national agenda

The Panel raised the following issues:-

In response to a query regarding cyber crime, the PCC stated that Northumbria Police was looking to recruit as special constables, etc people with experience and expertise in dealing with this type of crime.

It was asked if the PCC was to consult the Community Safety Partnerships and managers and reflect their priorities in her police and crime plan when it was refreshed. The PCC replied that she would. The current plan was to be reviewed to see how it has worked. It will not just include the police performance and crime but

also crime prevention and the work with the Community Safety Partnerships, Criminal Justice Board, Judiciary and victims.

It was asked if the Community Safety Partnerships were informed when there was community grant funding. The PCC replied that there was no funding for work on an ongoing basis. The Ministry of Justice funding, allocated on an annual basis, was given to PCCs to support work with direct victims of crime and their families. The small amount of grant funding from savings in office costs was used to support projects against the police and crime plan.

The PCC agreed with the suggestion that a review of the collaboration with the Fire Services be undertaken in six months. The PCC stated that there was no obligation for her to take the Fire Services under her remit as suggested by the Government and she had no interest in doing so.

It was asked if there was a specific definition for the vulnerable people to use the remote evidence centre. The PCC explained that it was subject to the consent of the judges taking into consideration the complainant or vulnerable victim. There may also be issues with witness contamination.

It was commented that there was not a lot of information given in the minutes of meetings involving the PCC on her website which was not very helpful. The PCC agreed to look into this.

Burglary dwelling offences increased by 9% in 2015/16 but following but following a number of police operations, there had been a decrease of 5% this month. It was asked if this was due to a causation effect or correlation because of the large increase or the police operations. The PCC stated that the police focus had been on targeting known offenders so it was difficult to see if it was a result of the operations undertaken.

It was commented that the Government's plans to use volunteers as substitute police officers was very concerning.

The projects outlined by the PCC to strengthen support and services for victims of crime for this year were excellent. However, this will be difficult to maintain in future years because of the Government cuts and the local authorities will also have no funding to support them. Everyone will need to work smarter together as these services could be severely affected. The PCC agreed and was also concerned.

It had previously been questioned whether drug prevention should be a priority in the police and crime plan as it continues to be a problem and it was linked with other types of crimes. The PCC replied that this will be part of the public consultation but drug related crime was reducing and previous legal highs were now illegal.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the Police and Crime Commissioner's update report be noted.
 - (ii) That a further report on the review of the collaboration with the Fire Services be submitted.

8. POLICE AND CRIME PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT – YEAR END 2015/16

The Panel considered an overview of performance against the police and crime plan objectives for 2015/16.

The Panel raised the following issues:-

In response to a question, the PCC explained that the conviction rate target at Magistrates Courts of 85% was part of the work to improve and speed up the Court processes.

The satisfaction rate of 84% for follow up was lower than all the other levels and it was asked if this was related to resolution without officer deployment. The PCC explained that it was more about officers telling victims, etc that they will call back but then do not because of leave, etc.

It was asked why the conviction rates for sexual offences and domestic abuse had reduced by 3% and 8% respectively and whether the PCC was happy that the Chief Constable was addressing this. The PCC replied that there was a lot of work being done to try and improve this but the conviction rates were not in the hands of the police. The Chief Constable has introduced accreditation for officers to improve the quality of the police files submitted to the Courts.

The 29% increase in reported crime in Northumbria had been reported in the media. The PCC reported that the force was reviewing its processes in line with the National Crime Recording Standards as a lot more crime has to be recorded than previously. A Member commented that the same excuses had been heard many times in the last fifteen years and asked if the PCC was satisfied that it was being addressed. The PCC replied that a Home Office Select Committee had reported on the different ways all forces recorded crime and the National Audit Office expected this problem would continually improve.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

9. DELIVERY OF THE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN – APRIL – JUNE 2016: TARGETS AND PERFORMANCE

Inspector Metcalfe gave a presentation on the performance and target information relating to the delivery of the police and crime plan for April - June 2016 which included:-

Victim's journey – initial contact, response, investigation, outcome

Safeguarding the vulnerable – prepare, prevent, protect, pursue

Community confidence – engagement and understanding, prevent, treatment, overall service

The Panel raised the following issues:-

The Councils get good local intelligence to be shared at an appropriate level with the police but from experience, in some cases there has been no outcome to the

reported crimes. It was suggested that the police could be more involved in relevant meetings on schools, domestic violence cases, etc so that their intelligence and skills can be better used in the local authorities. The PCC added that there were a number of initiatives between the police and Councils currently ongoing.

The victim's journey outlined in the presentation was audited at a strategic level and there are also call backs with victims.

It was asked what the effects of the cuts in the numbers of police officers and police staff had been. It was replied that the performance culture within the force had changed with a more efficient and pro-active way of working. Everyone had to work smarter and better, particularly with partner agencies.

A Member had been told by an officer that his team were demotivated because of the cuts in resources and the focus on vulnerable victims may stop them dealing with others when all victims were important. The PCC stated that the recent Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary PEEL inspection reported that morale in the force was high and staff took pride in their work. There has had to be a lot of changes to improve efficiency.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

10. COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER – ANNUAL REPORT – APRIL 2015 – MARCH 2016

In accordance with the agreed procedure, a report about the complaints and purported complaints against the Police and Crime Commissioner and every conduct matter recorded by the Monitoring Officer for the period April 2015 – March 2016 was submitted.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

11. COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER – QUARTERLY REPORT - JUNE 2016

In accordance with the agreed procedure, a report about the complaints and purported complaints against the Police and Crime Commissioner and every conduct matter recorded by the Monitoring Officer for the quarter ended June 2016 was submitted.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

12. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2015/16 – SUBJECT TO AUDIT

The Statements of Accounts, subject to audit, were published on 30 June 2016 in accordance with the 2015 Accounts and Audit Regulations. They include a number of changes for 2015/16 including who calls the audit, how and when electors are informed of their rights of inspection and objection and the publication of draft and audited statements of account and information that accompanies those statements.

The Statement of Accounts for the PCC includes a narrative statement that sets out the key financial and other performance for 2015/16 summarised as follows

The 2015/16 revenue budget was approved at £269.039m following:-

- A cut to grant funding of 5.1%, a cash reduction of £11.5m
- The requirement to make a further £16.2m of savings bringing the total achieved since 2010 to £108.1m
- Provision for increases in pay and prices of £4.4m
- Budget pressures of £1.7m
- An increase in revenue costs of £2.2m to support capital investment in buildings, vehicles and new technology
- The use of £9.22m from the Commissioner's reserves to support capital investment and phase budget savings to minimise the impact on frontline policing
- Acceptance of an increase in the council tax precept of 1.99%

The Revenue Outturn:-

- A £2.173m (0.8%) underspend on the revenue budget of £269.039m
- Savings achieved
- Budget pressures contained
- Reduced the £9.220m intended to draw from reserves to support the 2015/16 revenue budget to £7.047m.
- Reserves above 2% threshold

CHIEF CONSTABLE

The PCC delegated a budget of £258.187m to the Chief Constable for 2015/16 to enable the discharge of the activities under his direction and control.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer wanted forces to model the impacts of budget cuts of between 25% - 40% which added concerns of further severe grant cuts.

The PCC and Chief Constable agreed a strategy to minimise the potential impact of further significant grant cuts by acting in-year which resulted in a provisional underspend of £0.759m.

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner provisional outturn has resulted in an underspend of £1.414m for 2015/16.

The spending on capital in 2015/16 totalled £12.246m.

Based on the outturn, the general reserves will be maintained at a level above the 2% minimum (£5m) in accordance with the reserves policy and continue to support the Medium Term Financial Plan as intended.

The Regulations require public bodies to produce an Annual Governance Statement that provides an assessment of governance arrangements and their effectiveness which accompanies the Statement of Accounts for each body.

The PCC and Chief Constable's Joint Governance Monitoring Group undertook a review of the governance and internal control arrangements to prepare the Statements for each body. They were then scrutinised by the Joint Independent Audit

Committee on 20 June 2016 and subsequently authorised by the Chief Constable and PCC. The process did not identify any weaknesses in governance arrangements.

RESOLVED - That the publication of the 2015/16 Statements of Accounts, subject to audit, the financial outturn, subject to audit and the process of scrutiny and certification leading to the publication of the Statements of Accounts by 30 September 2016 be noted.

13. KEY ISSUES IN THE NEXT QUARTER

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

- APCC Chair - National Policing Vision/PHSE legislation
- Strengthening the LCJ system – LCJB/Efficiency board/victim advocacy
- Developing the next police and Crime Plan
- Reviewing the VAWG strategy
- Further developing restorative justice provision in partnership HMP Northumberland
- Completing the Annual Report for 2015/16
- Engaging with other PCCs' offices in a Victims Services Peer Review programme challenging and scrutinising the core victims services that we have commissioned
- Working with Northumbria Police on effective/efficient use of Out of Court disposals

14. EXPANDING CUSTOMER CHOICE 101 MEDIA CAMPAIGN

Caroline Pilling, Northumbria Police, gave a presentation on the 101 campaign to expand customer choice and offer a better service. A new 101 website was being created, as demonstrated, with useful links to partner agencies. The new pages have been developed to give greater choice to customers and to get ahead of the current demand.

Since the single non-emergency number, 101, was introduced by Northumbria Police in December 2011 its use has grown substantially. The force now receives 1 million non-emergency calls a year and 15% of these calls were about non-police matters, more than 400 calls every day where the police refer callers to the appropriate organisation.

A campaign was to be launched that aimed to give greater choice to callers offering a more effective service in contacting the most appropriate agency to deal their enquiry.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

15. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2016/17

Tuesday, 25 October 2016 at 2.00pm
Tuesday, 10 January 2017 at 2.00pm
Tuesday, 7 February 2017 at 2.00pm
Tuesday, 7 March 2017 at 2.00pm
Tuesday, 25 April 2017 at 2.00pm