



NORTHUMBRIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

25 October 2016

PRESENT:

Gateshead Council	Councillors J McElroy (Chair) and J McClurey
Newcastle City Council	Councillor J Robinson
North Tyneside Council	Councillors Burdis and Mulvenna
South Tyneside Council	Councillor G Kilgour
Sunderland City Council	Councillor H Trueman
Independent Co-opted Member	J Guy

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria

V Baird QC	- Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria (PCC)
E Snaith	- Chief Executive

Gateshead Council

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

APOLOGIES: Councillors N Kemp (Newcastle City Council), I Hutchinson and L Simpson (Northumberland County Council), J Welsh (South Tyneside Council), P Watson (Sunderland City Council) and S Isaacson

16. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the last meeting held on 26 July 2016 be approved as a correct record subject to minute 8 being amended to: the Chief Constable intends to introduce accreditation for officers to improve the quality of police files submitted to the Courts.

17. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- (i) Minute 5(ii) – the Local Government Association did not propose to give any further responses to the questions not answered at the Police and Crime Panel conference in March.

- (ii) Minute 5(iv) – because of the costs involved, the Panel did not send any delegates to the fifth national police and crime panel conference in Birmingham.
- (iii) Minute 6(ii) – the Chair and Vice-Chair have discussed ways to enhance the Panel's scrutiny role with the PCC. It is proposed that a themed section be included on the Panel's future agenda with Members being asked to suggest appropriate topics.

18. FEEDBACK FROM NATIONAL AND REGIONAL EVENTS

There were no national and regional events reported.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted

19. COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER – QUARTERLY REPORT - OCTOBER 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 October 2016 was submitted.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

20. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER – PROGRESS AND UPDATE REPORT

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

Supporting Victims Fund 2016-17
Commissioning Intentions 2017-18
Restorative Northumbria
Police Transformation Fund
Whole System Approach to Domestic Violence
North East Transformation, Innovation and Collaboration
Safeguarding Taxi Users
Association of Police and Crime Commissioners
Police Reform and Transformation Board
Delivering Value for Money
Engaging with Local Communities
Understanding Dyslexia
Mental Health and Policing
Home Affairs Select Committee – Inquiry into Hate Crime and its violent consequences
Living Wage
Northumbria Police Recruitment Campaign – 'be the difference'

The Panel raised the following issues:-

It was asked if there had been any coercive control prosecutions as part of the whole system approach to domestic abuse. The PCC replied that there had been none so far but work on this was ongoing.

The Panel shared the PCC's concerns in relation to the issuing of taxi licensing and the need to safeguard taxi users and supported the request for the Government to take action.

It was suggested that 6th form centres in schools could be contacted when recruiting new police officers and police staff. The PCC replied that the careers services had been involved to engage with young people.

In response to a question, the PCC replied that the number of applications to be police officers from the BME community still needed to be improved. A number of initiatives were being undertaken to try and get more people to apply.

It was reported that Sunderland Council was concerned about the Government's proposals in regard to the supported housing grant and the effect this may have on groups, organisations and domestic abuse victims. The PCC was not aware of any similar concerns within the other constituent Authorities.

RESOLVED - That the Police and Crime Commissioner's update report be noted.

21. DELIVERY OF THE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN – JULY – SEPTEMBER 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 July - September 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

Crime statistics force wide and for the six constituent Councils

The Panel raised the following issues:-

It was asked if the reduction in the conviction rates was related to disappointing decisions from the Crown Prosecution Service not to prosecute as this could affect the force and victims. The PCC replied that she was aware that the police were at times disappointed with some of their decisions. There was an appeals process which the police hardly used and they should be encouraged to use it more.

It was commented that after a police officer leaves a victim of crime it may be difficult for the victim to get further details or feedback on their case. There could be no follow up or continuity which affected the link with the victim. The PCC replied that officers should not say they will contact a victim about their case and then fail to do so. She agreed that there should be continuity and victims kept updated.

The PCC reported that she had raised concern about the increased time to answer 101 calls and suggestions had been made to improve this. It was hoped that

improvements would be made in the next three months and then the new website as part of the 101 media campaign should be implemented in six months.

The number of repeat victims had increased. This was acknowledged. Victims were assessed and if they were considered high or medium risk then subsequent victim harm reduction plans were produced.

Reference was made to the decrease in the charging and conviction rates for rape, sexual offences, domestic violence and hate crime. The PCC reported that the police were aware of this and had agreed actions to be taken and the force's performance was to be reviewed.

It was commented that the crime figures from the force and the Office of National Statistics appeared to be different so it was difficult to get an accurate picture. It was replied that the increase in crime was mainly as a result of complying with the national crime recording standards.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the information be noted.
 - (ii) That an update on the actions taken to improve the time taken to answer 101 calls be submitted.
 - (iii) That further to minute 17(iii) above, the apparent differences in the force's and Office of National Statistics crime figures be suggested as a possible theme for a future meeting.

22. POLICE AND CRIME PANEL CONSULTATION ON THE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN

After being elected in 2012, the PCC following consultation with local people to understand what their priorities were around policing used this information to set out the following five priorities in her first Police and Crime Plan:-

- Putting Victims First
- Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour
- Domestic and Sexual Abuse
- Reducing Crime
- Community Confidence

For each of these priorities a number of actions which have improved services to local people were identified. Towards the end of the PCC's first term in office, she was pleased that:

- 91% of victims are satisfied with the service provided by Northumbria Police – the highest level in England and Wales.
- Victims of crime are getting practical and emotional support from a new service, 'Victims First Northumbria'.
- 10,000 fewer anti-social behaviour (ASB) incidents in Northumbria from April 2015 to March 2016.
- Over half of the people suffering long term ASB in their neighbourhood had no further incidents after reporting it.

- Vulnerable people calling Northumbria Police are identified quicker and receive the right response from the force.
- More officers are in new neighbourhood bases, closer to where they are needed and by sharing premises with other organisations savings have been made.
- Domestic violence patrols continue on weekend evenings with domestic abuse experts and police officers working together to support victims.
- Recorded crime has increased in line with most other forces by 29%. This does not represent an increase in actual crime as recording standards are continually improving.
- By encouraging the reporting of domestic abuse and sexual offences, more victims have been supported who may have previously suffered in silence and at the same time increased the conviction rate for rape and domestic abuse offences.
- Frontline officers have more time available to deal with serious incidents as now, with the agreement of the caller, some incidents were resolved over the phone.

The PCC is now refreshing the Police and Crime Plan to see if the community feel Northumbria Police are tackling the issues that they want them to.

The Panel made the following suggestions:-

North Tyneside Council has a young Mayor and the other Councils have youth assemblies, etc. which the PCC could contact as part of her consultation with young people.

Also, the Councils have older people's forums, diversity forums and disability groups which could also be contacted by the PCC for their views on the police and crime plan priorities.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the information be noted.
 - (ii) That a further report on the police and crime plan consultation be submitted at the next meeting.

23. NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING OPERATING MODEL

Assistant Chief Constable Farrell gave a presentation on the Neighbourhood Policing Operating Model which included: neighbourhood policing, shaping the new neighbourhood model, new neighbourhood model, neighbourhood focus and the new neighbourhood sectors.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

24. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2015/16 AND EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S CONCLUSIONS

The Panel has previously been advised of the requirements for the publication of the draft Statements of Accounts 2015/16, public scrutiny and the audit process (Minute 12 – 2016/17).

The audit completion reports both note two outstanding matters relating to the LGPS Pension Fund auditor (EY) assurance and standard closure procedures. Both matters were subsequently resolved and the auditor issued a notice of conclusion of

outstanding matters as required by International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) on 23 September 2016.

The Joint Independent Audit Committee considered and recommended the Statements and the draft Audit reports at its meeting on 12 September 2016.

The Police and Crime Commissioner, Chief Constable and the Chief Finance Officer signed the accounts on 15 September 2016 and the auditor certified them as completed on 23 September 2016.

The Statements were published on the PCC's and Chief Constable's websites on 29 September 2016 together with the Notice of Conclusion of the Audit.

An event which occurred after the reporting period regarding an employment tribunal was noted in the draft accounts as a contingent liability. On 18 August 2016, the Court issued a judgement and an award of compensation to the claimant. As a result, an additional cost of £0.227m was recognised in the financial statements of the Chief Constable and the consolidated position in the Police and Crime Commissioner Group accounts.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

25. BUDGET SETTING PROCESS 2017/18

In February 2016, the PCC agreed the 2016/17 revenue and capital budgets and the 2016/17 – 2019/20 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

The force is reviewing the assumptions which underpin the budget and MTFS estimates in relation to central government funding for police forces, future budget pressures and inflationary increases and the capital investment priorities over the medium term.

Since the MTFS was agreed in February 2016, the UK economic growth estimates have slowed against the 2015 Autumn Statement and the increased political and economic uncertainty following the Brexit vote has added to concerns of future budget pressures on Government Departments.

The Home Office also intend to re-launch the review of the police funding formula which determines how overall police funding is allocated between forces in England with any changes being brought in for 2018/19 at the earliest.

The process and timetable to set the 2017/18 revenue and capital budgets and complete the revision of the MTFS were outlined.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted

26. KEY ISSUES IN THE NEXT QUARTER

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

- As Association of Police and Crime Commissioners' Chair - National Policing Vision/PHSE legislation

- Strengthening the Local Criminal Justice system – LCJB/Efficiency board/victim advocacy
- Developing the next Police and Crime Plan
- Reviewing the Violence Against Women and Girls 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 have been commissioned
- Working with Northumbria Police on effective/efficient use of Out of Court disposals

27. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

Tuesday, 10 January 2017 at 2.00pm