

## **DISCLAIMER**

**The attached minutes are DRAFT minutes. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information, statements and decisions recorded in them, their status will remain that of a draft until such time as they are confirmed as a correct record at the subsequent meeting.**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE AND CRIME PANEL  
HELD ON 5<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2013 AT 10.30 A.M.**

**North Somerset Council**

Councillor Nigel Ashton (Chairman), Councillor Roz Willis

**Mendip District Council**

Councillor John Parham

**Bristol City Council**

Councillor Peter Hammond

Councillor Pete Levy

Councillor Doug Naysmith

**Taunton Deane District Council**

Councillor Mark Edwards

**Sedgemoor District Council**

Councillor John Swayne

**South Somerset District Council**

Councillor Tony Lock

**Somerset County Council**

Councillor Richard Brown

**Bath and North East Somerset Council**

Councillor Lisa Brett, Councillor Francine Haerberling

**South Gloucestershire Council**

Councillor Mike Drew

**Independent Members**

Rosa Hui

Roger Kinsman

Brenda Steel

**Officers Present:**

Ian Pagan – Lead Officer Bristol CC

Jude Williams – Scrutiny Officer, Bristol CC

Patricia Jones – Clerk to the Panel, Bristol CC

Sue Mountstevens – Police and Crime Commissioner

Nick Gargan – Chief Constable

Joanna Coulon – Head of Criminal Justice, Youth and Health

Partnerships OPCC

Mark Simmonds -

**PCP  
1.6/13**

**WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Introductions were made and the Commissioner and the Chief Constable were welcomed to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Brenda Steel and Councillor Edwards.

**PCP  
2.6/13**

**MEMBERSHIP OF THE PANEL**

**RESOLVED - that the membership of the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel for the 2013/14 municipal year be noted.**

**PCP  
3.6/13**

**ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**

**RESOLVED - that Councillor Nigel Ashton be elected Chair and Councillor Francine Haerberling be elected Vice-Chair of the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel for the 2013/14 municipal year.**

**PCP  
4.6/13**

**FUTURE DATES AND CONSIDERATION OF POSSIBLE MEETING VENUES FOR 2013/14**

The Panel agreed that Castlewood would remain the venue for future meetings. The dates proposed for future meetings were also agreed and it was confirmed that the requested Budget training and tour of Police Headquarters would take place on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September .

**RESOLVED - that Castlewood remains the venue for the following meetings of the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel in 2013/14 :-**

**2013**

**24<sup>th</sup> October**  
**11<sup>th</sup> December**  
**(18<sup>th</sup> December if grant announcement  
is late)**

***\*23<sup>rd</sup> September – budget training and  
tour at Police Headquarters.***

**2014**

**5<sup>th</sup> February**  
**21<sup>st</sup> March**  
**11<sup>th</sup> June**

**PCP  
5.6/13**

**MINUTES – AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE AND CRIME  
PANEL – 15<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2013**

**RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting of the  
Avon and Somerset Police and Crime  
Panel held on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2013 be  
confirmed as a correct record and  
signed by the Chair subject to the  
recording of Councillor Dowding's  
apologies.**

**PCP  
6.6/13**

**PUBLIC FORUM**

The Panel heard from David Redgewell in relation to this statement. A copy of the statement was placed in the Minute Book.

**PCP  
7.6/13**

**COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE**

The Commissioner highlighted the following from the briefing note circulated in advance of the meeting :-

- A Deputy Commissioner would not be appointed.
- Following a restructure of the OPCC, a Health and Wellbeing Officer and Youth Champion had been appointed. The CEX

and Chief Financial Officer would also have increased administrative support.

- Discussions were underway to facilitate the redesignation of Ashfield Young Offenders Institution as a sex offenders institution.
- An expanded Special Branch collaboration and a tri-force collaboration with Wiltshire and Gloucestershire in relation to roads policing, dogs and firearms had been agreed by the SW regional constabularies and Commissioners.

Below is a summary of the discussion that followed:-

- Community Safety Grant Allocation - each project had been set objectives and performance would be monitored on a quarterly basis. Decisions to continue funding would be evidence based. The Commissioner acknowledged the important work carried out by smaller groups in the community.
- The Commissioner had met with the Health and Wellbeing Boards and Clinical Commissioning Groups. The aim was to develop strong working relationships and work collectively on common interests of concern and challenges. A specific driver was the care provided in hospital based places of safety. Only 1 bed was available at Callington Road Hospital to cover Bristol, Banes, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset. This meant that people with mental health issues were being detained in police cells on a regular basis. Additional beds are urgently needed to redress this capacity issue.
- The commissioning of victims services and tackling violence against women and children were major priorities for the coming year. The commissioning framework had recently been published and scoping meetings were taking place in preparation for April 2014.
- The Commissioner and Councillor Parham agreed to meet to discuss the closure of Shepton Mallet Prison.
- Members raised concerns that they did not feel sufficiently sighted on how the Commissioner and her office were fulfilling statutory partnership duties.
- All spending decisions were published on the OPCC website. A link would be provided to the Panel.

**RESOLVED - that the report be noted.**

## **POLICE AND CRIME ANNUAL REPORT**

The panel considered the Commissioner's Police and Crime Annual Report (agenda item no.9)

The Commissioner introduced the report and below is a summary of the detailed discussion that followed:-

### *Review of the Annual Report*

- Panel members referred to previous discussions regarding increased powers for PCSOs. The Panel felt that this should be addressed and would assist in driving the Commissioner's performance ambitions. The Chief Constable stated that notwithstanding continuing financial constraints, he remained committed to neighbourhood and frontline policing as shared with the panel at his first meeting. PCSOs would be given additional powers to detain a person for up to 30 minutes (pending the arrival of a warranted officer) and to search for alcohol and drugs. Training would be given but the new powers would not involve the issuing of personal protection equipment.

New-build custody suites open in Filton, Bridgwater and Keynsham in March 2014 would increase the size of the estate considerably and the ambition was to have a centralised neighbourhood policing hub. The potential for loss of effectiveness if PCSOs were no longer ringfenced to a particular locality was acknowledged, however there had been no chief officer instigated policy change in this respect.

- Despite a fall in total recorded crime, it was recognised that there was still some way to go to improve the current national performance position of 30/43. Crime reduction preventative work was underway with other forces and organisations.
- Although crime was reducing, the public's perception of crime was too high. This was reflected in a fall in public confidence levels across the country and marked a shift in Avon and Somerset's national position to 34/43.
- It was suggested that there had been a disproportionate allocation of the Community Safety Grant to Bristol CSP. The Commissioner pointed out that Bristol would not receive money as part of the drug testing intervention PFI programme.

- The commissioner was asked if the 8% fall in the reporting of domestic violence and sexual violence represented a reporting issue or a genuine drop in the number of crimes committed. The Commissioner stated that she would like reporting figures to increase as this would reflect an increase in confidence. Steps were being taken to improve this.
- Despite a healthy drop in burglary offences in recent years, it was noted that detection rates fell last year and only moderately recovered this year. The Chief Constable was asked to outline the change of direction necessary to improve the performance position of 26/43 and achieve the top 10 aspiration. It was reported that a wholesale review and reconfiguration of the way in which burglary offences are managed and overseen had already taken place. The way in which performance is monitored had also been adjusted. Purposeful police officers, forensic recovery and the integrated offender management at point of arrest would reverse the downward detection trend. The detection of serious sexual offences and burglaries were now being closely supervised and the Chief Constable was confident in the arrangements in place. In the short term, it was accepted that the figures were disappointing but the Panel was invited to consider the unique challenges faced by the constabulary.
- In the long term it was recognised that inspired leadership was required to make step change in the confidence levels of both officers and the public. The Chief Constable had set out his vision for the force and leaders across the force were engaged. A document “Our Five Year Ambition”, circulated at the meeting, promoted a visible, resilient, confident and accessible force. There was on-going reinforcement to steer officer behaviour in a weekly blog, social media and a series of messages so staff were aware of what is required of them. Reliability, honesty and integrity were fundamental elements of good interaction with the public.
- Domestic and serious sexual violence offences were notoriously difficult to prosecute. Cases were categorised as being detected if the offender was arrested, prosecuted and a disposal (resolution) arrived at. In cases where the offender was known to the victim, detection in terms of identification was not the issue, but the figure would be much higher if victims felt able/were more inclined to proceed with the complaint. For this

reason, it was suggested that offences when the perpetrator is known to the victim should be categorised separately. The Commissioner confirmed that this was being looked at.

- Acting Deputy Chief Constable John Long was dealing with BME communities and the issue of consultation, translation and internet access. The purpose of the Commissioner's one day out each week and John Smith's recent meeting with Rosa Hui, was to talk to people and make the OPCC more accessible.
- It was noted that a number of shops and traders had agreed to take part in a scheme to assist people who find themselves in difficulty because of mental health issues.
- The Commissioner stated that she was committed to addressing the issue of female genital mutilation (FGM). This involved effective working with schools and women and young girls within the community through a multi-agency approach. A specific officer in the constabulary was also working on publicity and a new leaflet was available from today. It was recognised that FGM cases were difficult to prosecute for a number of reasons, but primarily because of difficulties in obtaining evidence and maintaining continued co-operation with the victim. Whilst there had been no prosecutions so far, the CPS was understood to be committed to pursuing offenders and securing convictions if there was sufficient evidence to proceed with a case.
- The Commissioner agreed to circulate a paper outlining the community safety grant process including principles for allocation. The process was described as rigorous and projects needed to demonstrate how outcomes would be achieved.

#### *Priorities for next year*

- The Chief Constable briefed the Panel on the restructure of the Force. In an effort to narrow the budget gap, there would be visible change around the senior leadership arrangements. A two stage programme of change overseen by Chief Superintendent Sarah Crew, would reduce the number of District Commanders from 6 to 3 and Chief Superintendents from 12 to 8 (with an option for 6). Savings at the top of the organisation would have the effect of preserving 25-30 officers on the street. Notwithstanding the reductions, there would still be an identifiable presence at Chief Inspector level in the community, and a District Commander and Chief Officer



responsible for district policing. A table of relevant contacts/officers was circulated.

- A period of upheaval should be expected as the estate grew and less effective buildings were closed. This included Police stations but translated into less floorspace, not fewer places for the public to go. The Chief Constable reassured the Panel of a continued Police presence in Bridgewater and towns in Somerset West following the closure of Bridgewater Police Station.
- The Chief Constable stated he was particularly conscious of the projected deficit of £15 million in 2015/16. Without adjustments, some forces would be pushed below the level of viability. Discussions with the Home Office would continue and staffing structures, allowances, income generation and the cost of pensions were all key issues. The point was made that the recommendations emerging from the Windsor Review on pay and conditions would cost the Force an additional £250K.
- The College of Policing was in the process of drawing up national guidelines in relation to sponsorship. The Commissioner would look at sponsorship in more detail when the guidelines were available. The importance of the Police remaining independent and impartial was emphasised.
- It was reported that the late night levy was costing the force £500K per annum in additional officer support. There was general agreement that where events or certain situations required a special police service or additional support, a viable charge should be imposed. There were not unilateral plans to make policy changes at the present time, and the outcome of ministerial and ACPO discussions were awaited. The Commissioner reported that the 5 Commissioners in the regions were already working closely to discuss specific collaboration projects in an effort to minimise costs.
- The commissioning of victims services and tackling violence against women and children were major priorities for the coming year. Asked if her priorities in the community were being affected by reducing budgets, the Commissioner stated that residents regarded burglary as important/very important and for this reason she was also taking burglary forward as a priority. Following consultation, work around road safety, the

accessibility of the Police and protecting the elderly from rogue traders was also underway.

### *Working together*

- The Commissioner and the Panel discussed ways in which they could work together. The Commissioner suggested that involvement of the Panel would add value to some areas of her work programme as follows:
  - Victim Services commissioning
  - Needs assessment
  - Business Crime Forum
  - Community Policing Awards and PCC Pride awards
- The Panel placed on record its sincere appreciation of the valuable services rendered by the officers in the OPCC during the transition period.

**RESOLVED - (1) that the report be noted.**

**(2) that the Commissioner circulates a paper outlining the community safety grant process including principles for allocation.**

**PCP  
9.6/13**

### **WORK PROGRAMME**

Panel Members discussed the potential to align with the Commissioner's Champion areas in developing their work plan for the coming year. The Champion areas were confirmed as follows:

- Anti-social behaviour
- Tackling burglary
- Violence Against Women and Children
- Victims
- Youth (appointment process currently underway)

The Panel also discussed capacity and methodological issues in relation to involvement in the areas of work suggested by the Commissioner. Councillor Brett indicated that she would be happy to get involved in the victim commissioning work.

**RESOLVED - that the work programme be noted.**

**PCP**

**10.6/13**

**FEEDBACK FROM REVIEW AND PLANNING SESSION 13<sup>TH</sup>  
MAY 2013**

The Scrutiny Officer invited members to consider what type of evidence might be needed in order to carry out the formal pieces of work that the Panel is required to undertake. It was suggested that this might involve hearing evidence from someone who could provide a steer on something that was not happening locally. It was recognised that there was information and research available that could usefully feed into the Panel, to assist in making evidence based challenges .

The Panel considered the possibility of pursuing proactive pieces of work and agreed that the scrutiny officer should scope the suggested areas of work in conjunction with the OPCC. Looking at timescales, objectives, evidence required, and how the work might best be addressed given the Panel's existing commitments and capacity. This should then be circulated to Panel members for feedback.

**RESOLVED - that the Scrutiny Officer draft and circulate a scoping paper covering potential proactive work programme items :-**

- a. suggested by the Commissioner, and**
- b. arising from the proposed alignment with the Commissioner's five 'Champion priorities.**

**(to assist the Panel in deciding what should be developed as part of the work programme).**

**PCP**

**11.6/13**

**POLICE AND CRIME PANEL BUDGET REPORT**

The Panel considered a report of the Lead Officer:-

- updating members on the Home Office grant settlement with PCP host authorities for funding Panel costs and expenses in 2013/14;
- reporting on the outturn for the first half year of operation 2012/13 ;and

- proposing a budget for 2013/14.

**RESOLVED - that the report be noted.**

**PCP**

**12.6/13**

**COMPLAINTS REPORT**

The panel considered a report of the Chief Executive, Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner's Office providing members with an oversight of all complaints made against the Commissioner, for scrutiny of the initial handling by the Chief Executive of Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner's Office.

**RESOLVED - that the report be noted.**

(The meeting ended at 1.00pm)

CHAIR