

**Minutes of a meeting of the
Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel
Held on 21st March 2014 at 11.00am**

Bath and North East Somerset Council

- P Councillor Lisa Brett
- P Councillor Francine Haeberling

Bristol City Council

- P Councillor Gary Hopkins
- A Councillor Hibaq Jama
- P Councillor Doug Naysmith

Mendip District Council

- P Councillor John Parham

North Somerset Council

- P Councillor Nigel Ashton (Chairman),
- P Councillor Roz Willis

Sedgemoor District Council

- P Councillor John Swayne

Somerset County Council

- P Councillor Richard Brown

South Gloucestershire Council

- A Councillor Mike Drew
- A Councillor Heather Goddard

South Somerset District Council

- P Councillor Tony Lock

Taunton Deane District Council

- P Councillor Jane Warmington

West Somerset District Council

- P Councillor Stuart Dowding

Independent Members

- P Rosa Hui
- P Roger Kinsman
- P Andrew Sharman

Officers Present:

- Shana Johnson - Democratic Services Manager
- Jude Williams - Scrutiny Officer
- Patricia Jones - Democratic Services Officer

PCP

61.3/14 Membership

The Panel noted that Councillor Howells and Councillor Edwards had been replaced by Councillor Goddard and Councillor Warmington.

PCP

62.3/14 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Goddard and Councillor Drew.

PCP

63.3/14 Public Forum

The Panel heard from David Redgewell and Councillor Gary Hopkins. The statements and petition were circulated in advance of the meeting and copies placed in the Minute Book.

David Redgewell drew attention to the petition running against the proposed closure of Trinity Road Police station. He emphasised the impact of the night time economy on this area and the need to keep a strong and effective presence there. The importance of robust consultation across Bath, Brislington, Wells, Bridgwater, Taunton and Thornbury was also highlighted.

A Police liaison group had been formed in Weston-Super-Mare, and the BTP was meeting with the Commissioner in relation to collaborative working. It was hoped that a method to increase reporting of Hate Crime would be looked at. A reference was made to the increasing problem of tagging and unauthorised graffiti and its effect on the community in safety terms.

Councillor Hopkins reported on the on-going traffic issues along Airport Road and the approach to the traffic lights at Wells Road. Attention was drawn to the numerous accidents in this location and the danger to road users. Councillor Hopkins recommended a joint approach and urged the Police to work alongside the Mayor to review the traffic arrangements in this area. It was noted that the petition submitted had been signed by every resident along Airport Road.

RESOLVED – that the statements and petitions be noted.

PCP

64.3/14

Minutes – Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel – 5th February 2014

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel held on 5 February 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

PCP

65.3/14

Chairman's Business

The Chairman reported that mobile webcasting equipment to be purchased by North Somerset Council would be available for use at PCP meetings if the Panel decided to webcast future meetings. This being the case, the Panel would make a small contribution towards the initial outlay and the on-going operating costs.

The Chairman thanked the Commissioner and Chief Constable for the report defining their roles. He confirmed that the Panel was in the process of producing the same for inclusion in the Annual Report.

PCP

66.3/14

Police and Crime Commissioner's Update Report

The Panel noted that briefing note circulated in advance of the meeting updating the Panel on recent actions, news and events.

The Commissioner also reported on her work with regional colleagues to establish a protocol and mediation process to address potential conflict between PCCs and Chief Constables. It was agreed that the Panel's view on the protocol would be sought at the appropriate time.

Following the recent publication of the Ellison Review, the Commissioner confirmed that she was waiting for Damian Green to comment on her proposal to carry out an in-depth review of low level complaints and to hold misconduct hearings in public.

Reference was made to the following in the ensuing discussion:-

- Stop and search – the Commissioner's input into the Home Office Review was welcomed, specifically her comments recognising the impact on the community and the disproportionate stop of BME members of the public.

- The Commissioner acknowledged the progress of the integrated partnership programme between Wiltshire Council, Wiltshire Police and health bodies that enabled them to share specific resources. Given the number of local authorities that made up the force area, it was suggested that this would be particularly challenging for Avon and Somerset.
- Flooding – whilst a consistent neighbourhood approach was now evident, the need for a consistent Police lead by a senior officer was emphasised.

RESOLVED – that the view of the Panel be sought on the mediation protocol/process currently being produced by the South West Police and Crime Commissioners.

PCP

67.3/14

Review of the Police and Crime Plan

The Panel considered a report of the Commissioner (agenda item no. 8) reviewing and updating the first plan produced in March 2013. It was confirmed that final revisions would be made to the draft plan after consolidating feedback from the public and partner consultation process and the feedback received directly from the Panel at this meeting.

Below is a summary of the comments and issues raised by Panel:-

- Sexual violence and abuse remained a high priority for the Commissioner. It was accepted that to maximise reporting, gender neutrality and increasing confidence and trust in the Police was key. It was felt that a clearer statement in relation to male victims was required at page 5 of the plan.
- The lack of contribution from health organisations was raised as a concern. It was hoped that the Commissioner would work with them to raise the profile of the plan.
- The clear distinction between the role and function of the Commissioner and the Chief Constable was acknowledged. In the context of public engagement, the Commissioner reported that she made a deliberate decision to invite the Chief Constable to some meetings to give the public access to him.
- The isolation of women in some BME communities was highlighted. The Commissioner confirmed that her diary was available to the voluntary organisations that wished to meet with her.

- The Commissioner advised the Panel to engage with local policing team on crime prevention in an effort to counter incidences of burglary and the repeat offences highlighted during the meeting.
- The Commissioner was invited to comment on how she intended to put into practice her plans to “empower communities to tackle the issues that most effect them”. It was reported that residents were being encouraged to lead on the Community Speed Scheme. Work was also underway at Neighbourhood forum and PACT meetings to determine what the public expect as a basic level of support from Police officers at these meetings. The Neighbourhood Watch Scheme was also being actively driven forward.
- The Commissioner would establish why an appropriate Police representative did not attend the last round of Neighbourhood Partnership/Forum meetings in south Bristol.
- Transforming Rehabilitation – Police Commissioners continued to be excluded from any formal discussions, and as a result the regional Commissioners would be making public any issues of concern. The CEO in the OPCC was also participating in a stakeholders panel in an effort to influence outcomes.
- The Commissioner was commended for the progress of the Shape Mendip Project for integrated public services. She agreed to establish when the shortfall of beat officers in the area was likely to be resolved.
- The Commissioner was asked about the cost of re-commissioning speed cameras and the data relied on to support the re-introduction. It was suggested that there had been no increase in accidents since they were withdrawn. The Commissioner stated that residents had been very clear that speeding was important to them. She agreed to share the information/figures demonstrating that the cameras would be cost neutral in a few years time. The point was made that speeding fines went directly to the Treasury. There were plans to invest in mobile vans and 3 additional motorbikes. Following a year on year drop in accidents from 80 to 40, the Commissioner reported that accidents had increased to 67 last year. The Commissioner was asked to consider the case for additional cameras in hotspots with recognised problems.
- There was general agreement that the review of the plan had resulted in a more robust, clearly defined document.
- It was noted that the LGA was producing national guidance to increase awareness and understanding of female genital mutilation (FGM). Councillor Brett was invited to contact the Commissioner’s Team to discuss the possibility of involvement in the roll out.

- It was felt that the importance of partnership working with LAs had not been sufficiently addressed in the plan. The Commissioner agreed to take this point away.
- Councillor Lock agreed to take up his query relating to checks and balances in the allocation of community safety funding, outside the meeting.
- Concerns around accessibility of information and language support for minority communities were reiterated. It was noted that advice had been sought and steps taken to improve access within the limited resources available.
- The Panel welcomed the charter with the voluntary sector setting out a commitment to close liaison with voluntary sector umbrella organisations and consultation on decision making processes. It was agreed that the OPCC would circulate the responses to the consultation.

RESOLVED –

- (1) that the revised Police and Crime Plan for 2014-2017 be noted;**
- (2) that the responses to consultation on the revised plan be circulated to the Panel;**
- (3) that the OPCC confirms why an appropriate Police representative did not attend the last round of Neighbourhood Partnership/Forum meetings in south Bristol;**
- (4) that the OPCC confirms when the shortfall of beat officers in the Mendip area is likely to be resolved; and**
- (5) that the Commissioner considers the request to emphasise the importance of partnership working with Local Authorities in the plan.**

PCP

68.3/14

Victims Commissioning Update Report including a report from the Panel Link Member

The Panel considered a progress report of the OPCC (agenda item no. 9) on the delivery of the Integrated Victims Strategy and outlining commissioning intentions for support services for victims.

Councillor Brett provided a detailed summary of the OPCC's intentions with regard to the care of victims in Avon and Somerset, as set out in detail in her report. Attention was drawn to the diagram demonstrating the support pathways attached as Appendix 1.

Councillor Brett reported that she had governance concerns in relation to the multi-agency Integrated Victims Board established to improve the experience of victims. The membership was heavily weighted (70%) on the side of the Police and as yet it was unclear how two Police departments would hold each other to account. She felt there was a case for independent advocacy.

However the primary concern related to the process of referring a victim to a statutory provider without funding to follow the referral. The Commissioner confirmed that a pilot was scheduled for the summer and much would be learnt from this. Gaps in the service would be mapped out and money spent on those services not being ?? for victims. The new strategy would be far more supportive of smaller organisations and charities than present. Self-referral arrangements would be in place by October along with a dedicated website.

Councillor Brett stated that whilst she was impressed by the Board's genuine will to deliver and its commitment to improve the quality of the service for the victims, how it worked in practice was key.

Reference was made to Bristol's Quality of Life Survey which indicated that reported crime was down from 48% in 2006 to 37% in 2012. The Commissioner was asked how trends and intelligence such as this were gathered and co-ordinated to influence services

and build up social confidence. The Panel was advised that the public was encouraged to make use of the 101 non-emergency number as a way of reporting crime and providing intelligence – such information could assist in an investigation or prosecution or else build up a picture, allowing the information to be formally recorded using an intelligence grid. This was noted but it felt that this would not necessarily reverse the fall in reporting.

The Commissioner stated that making the Police service more open and transparent would encourage people to come forward. The reporting of serious sexual assault had increased by 30% and funding for victims would be spent as efficiently and effectively as possible. She was also content with the complaints system as more people were using it.

It was noted that a member of the Panel had found the commissioning event held by the SW regional PCCs very informative. The Commissioner was asked what steps she was taking to support the smaller organisations with a time-consuming and onerous tendering process. It was reported that the umbrella organisations were being encouraged to assist where possible. The best advice was to collaborate and work with other organisations to ensure the best possible bid comes forward.

It was reported that it made sense for the serious issue of cyber bullying to be addressed nationally, but a reference to cyber crime had been included at page 11 of the plan. The Commissioner was also aware of a push for a regional strategy that would include working with young people and schools to ensure help was available before tragic circumstances resulted.

Councillor Doug Naysmith

The Commissioner, Chairman and members of the Panel placed on record their sincere appreciation of Councillor Naysmith's contributions and dedication to public service over many years. As an MP, member of the former Police Authority and latterly as a BCC councillor, his work was considered invaluable and he was thanked for his many achievements.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

PCP

69.3/14

Panel Support Costs Update Report

The Panel considered a report from the Lead Officer (agenda item no. 11) providing an update on support costs.

Members noted the 13/14 forecast and 4th Quarter expenditure to date, set out in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report.

There was discussion in relation to the annual allowance of £920.00 that was available to members and designed to cover the costs incurred from attending meetings such as travel, subsistence and child care. There was general support for a move towards receiving this payment, to be paid quarterly and in arrears and in lieu of the current system of submitting ad hoc expense claims (10 voting in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention).

Members were requested to submit any outstanding expense claims as soon as possible.

In conclusion, the Chairman confirmed that the Panel's contribution towards webcasting any future training would be met from the amount of £6,650 specified in Appendix 1 to the report.

RESOLVED –

- (1) that the 2013/14 forecast and 4th quarter expenditure to date be noted;**
- (2) that with effect from the 2014/15 municipal year, the Panel moves towards an annual allowance payment of £920.00, to be paid quarterly and in arrears, and in lieu of the current system of submitting ad hoc expense claims; and**
- (3) that the Panel's contribution towards future webcasting of Panel meetings and any future training be met from the amount of £6,650 specified in Appendix 1 to the report.**

PCP

70.3/14

Annual Report Including Publicity

Members considered a report of the Scrutiny Officer (agenda item no. 12) setting out the scope and proposed content of the Panel's Annual Report.

On the basis that the current police governance and scrutiny arrangements were not as clear and less visible than the former Police Authority, there was general agreement that the profile and public awareness of the Panel could be raised and made more transparent in the Annual Report. Information about the Panel Link Members and the work they were involved in could also be usefully included.

The Scrutiny Officer confirmed that the report would be drafted within the next month and circulated to members for comment/approval, in advance of its submission to the AGM on the 11th June 2014.

RESOLVED – that the Annual Report be circulated for comment to members of the Panel and considered at the Panel's AGM on the 11th June 2014.

PCP

71.3/14

Work Programme and Induction/training Needs

The Panel considered a report of the Scrutiny Officer (agenda item no.13).

The Scrutiny Officer sought the Panel's views on the merits of holding an induction/review session for all members, using the same external trainers as last year. Following discussion, it was agreed that the training needs of the Panel would be best addressed by holding 2 separate training sessions:-

- A budget training session replicating the session held on the 23rd September 2013 at Police Headquarters.
- A further general training session – learning from another Panel, good practice and alternative ways of working.

RESOLVED –

- (1) that the Work Programme be noted.**
- (2) that 2 training sessions be arranged at an appropriate time In the new Municipal Year as agreed above.**
- (3) that the AGM meeting date of 11th June remain in place (time to be confirmed)**

PCP

72.3./14 Complaints report

The Panel considered a report of the Chief Executive OPCC (agenda item no.14) providing an oversight of all complaints made against the Commissioner, for scrutiny by the Panel of the initial handling by the Chief Executive.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

PCP

73.3/14 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED -

that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

**PCP
74.3/14**

COMPLAINT HEARING – GJ

(Exempt paragraph 1 – information relating to any individual)

Members considered a complaint currently under consideration by the Independent Police Complaints Commission.

RESOLVED –

- (1) that the report of the CEO be noted.**
- (2) that the CEO's confirmation that the complaint has been formally recorded be noted.**
- (3) that the Panel awaits the outcome of the IPCC investigation before a decision is taken as to its next steps.**

(The meeting ended at 1.30pm)

CHAIR