

Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel

Date: Thursday, 15th December 2016

Time: 10.30 am (pre-meeting 10.00am)

Venue: Committee Room, Weston Town Hall, Walliscote Grove Road, BS23 1UJ

Councillor Members Present

Nigel Ashton (Chairman), Afzal Shah, Ann Bown, Asher Craig, Dine Romero, Heather Goddard, Jane Warmington, John Parham, Mark Shelford, Mark Weston, Martin Wale, Mike Drew, Richard Brown, Roz Willis, Stuart Dowding

Independent Members Present:-

Bryony Ball, Joseph Mullis, Andrew Sharman.

Officers in attendance:-

Andrea Dell – Clerk

Joanna Coulon - Criminal Justice and Commissioning Support Officer (OPCC)

1. Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

2. Public Forum

No Public Forum statements or questions were received.

3. Declarations of Interest

None

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 16th June 2016

Resolved – that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 12th October 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. Chairman's Business

The Chairman highlighted that discussions are currently underway as to the future host authority for the panel and this is to progress in early 2017.

A visit to the Firearms Centre is being coordinated for the panel by the Chair on 17th January 2017.

6. Chief Constable six monthly presentation

Presentation from Chief Constable Andy Marsh with contributions from Sean Price, Avon & Somerset Performance Manager.

- The panel welcomed a presentation from the Chief Constable that included details of notable operational activity, an analysis of the organisation's strengths and areas for development by the Chief Constable and the actions moving forward. There was a particular focus on the increased use of technology, body cameras and predictive analytics specifically, and the impacts these are having on targeted resource management, health and safety and increased turnaround times from the Crown Prosecution Services. The level of savings required (£8million) was also noted.
- The panel questioned the use of predictive analytics across the region and were advised that it is being used across the Avon & Somerset area but is most advanced in Bristol on work related to child sexual exploitation.
- The panel noted the rapid speed of ICT development and there was discussion about the future potential within the police force and adaptations for local government (e.g. social care usage). Use in the custody process was particularly identified as an area for future development and the need for funding challenges to be met with cross sector/boundary solutions.
- Discussion was had about the use of the technology to concentrate on performance issues and officer behaviour. It was advised that this is an area that the leadership team are monitoring closely.
- The panel raised some concerns about cyber security and also the risk should equipment be used by offenders. In response it was advised that new technology is being rolled out next year with a high personal security specification to counter this potential. It was agreed by the Panel and Commissioner that an update will be provided on cyber-crime at the March meeting. It was acknowledged that cyber-crime is creating new demands upon the police.
- Panel members thanked the Chief Constable for the success of Operation Heron in supporting business to help themselves and specifically in the use of online reporting.
- The panel raised the issue of new academic entry requirements for police officers. The Commissioner and Chief Constable clarified that the new university accreditation is to occur as part of ongoing training and development of new officers and is obtained during their time in the force not an accreditation required to join the force.
- Concern was raised that not all parish councils are receiving regular police reports. The Commissioner advised that all PACTs and Neighbourhood forums should be receiving a list of incidents and regular reporting. Commissioner's Office to investigate. It was also confirmed that there are no planned changes to relationships with Neighbourhood Watch although the Commissioner highlighted inconsistencies in interaction across the region and that is being reviewed by the PCC office.
- Discussion was had about the need to promote the complexity of policing. Panel members reported back on their positive impression of the call centre and the citizen academy was highlighted as a good method for helping people to understand policing. Panel members requested copies of the slides and figures quoted by the Chief Constable for inclusion in relevant community publications to build public knowledge.
- The closing of South Somerset custody suite was flagged as an area for concern and what contingency planning had been carried out. The chief constable outlined a changing culture towards individuals coming in at appointed times which needs to be considered when prioritising spending. The centre is scheduled for closure April 2017 and police arrest vehicles will be rolled out to transport offenders to Bridgwater. The use

of a 'custody pod' is also being considered. It was identified by the Commissioner as a known area for concern and one they will be monitoring closely.

- Concern was raised about funding reductions pulling local authorities away from early intervention in housing and social care and the need for early intervention. It was highlighted that working with partners is the 4th priority in the Police and Crime Plan and thus will continue to be an area of focus.
- The use of predicative analytics in profiling communities was raised as a concern. The Chief Constable thanked the panel for raising this and asked for assistance from councillors in reaching out into communities and also in working to encourage diverse recruitment into the police force.
- It was requested that the slides be circulated to panel members and the statistics provided on the force ranking by the IPCC. The Chief Constable agreed to visit individual local authorities to deliver the presentation.

7. Budget and precept scrutiny preparation/consultation (Pages 12 - 22)

Report was presented by Mark Simmonds, PCC Chief Finance Officer

- Panel members noted the report was an updated version of that brought to the previous panel meeting.
- Mid-way in the meeting the details of the provisional government settlement were released from government and inferred a reduction of approximately £600,000 in funding with the freeze grant remaining the same. It is a draft settlement figure but it is unlikely to change. It was noted that further work was required to analyse the settlement and its impact but the panel thanked the officers for providing the update.
- The panel were reassured that collection rates by council across the region were at a high rate. A discussion was had about the likelihood of a funding announcement akin to that for education for policing and it was advised that there is not yet any further clarity on this and that they will continue to monitor how funding is spread out across the country. The Commissioner advised they will continue to pressurise central government about inequity in funding for the region. It was noted that work on fair funding is progressing in Somerset and this should be examined.
- Officer increments were perceived to be universally applied and should be reviewed however it was advised that this is a nationally agreed system and unlikely to be reviewed in the coming years.
- The panel queried if all opportunities for income generation from both front-line and back office services are being maximised. It was advised that they were where possible but the concentration is on delivering core police services. Collaboration with other services, specifically the fire service, was actively being pursued to increase resilience and produce savings.
- The panel agreed that barring significant changes the report will be brought back in February.

8. Commissioner's Update Report (Pages 23 - 30)

The Panel received an update from the Commissioner which highlighted the following issues:

- The Commissioner has secured funding from the Home Office Police Transformation Fund to conduct a review to transform the local criminal justice service. Behavioural Insights has been appointed to conduct the review which is due to report in March 2017.
- Commissioning update:
 - All councils are encouraged to respond to the consultation for the commissioning of child sexual exploitation related services.
 - There are small reductions in the community safety grant now known as the Police & Crime grant. This has been committed to for three years to give increased resilience to providers.
 - The Home Office funding for violence against women is £15m over three years to be shared across the country resulting in a very limited amount that Avon & Somerset can bid for.
 - Funding for existing activity will continue but there will be limited funding for any additional service. MARAC and IDVA funding may be impacted.
- A reducing reoffending board is due to start meeting from January that will be reviewing the performance of the police and probation service and reoffending is an area that requires greater involvement.
- There will be increased scrutiny of Taser and stop & search usage in response to concerns about the legitimate use of police powers.
- The Commissioner re-emphasised the importance of the use of technology particularly the body cameras in reducing turn-around times for CPS charges.
- Work is ongoing to further collaborate with the fire service. It is noted that there is to be an independent review into the Avon Fire Service and the Commissioner will be sighted on the terms of reference for this review.
- The panel raised further concerns about the closure of Yeovil's custody centre and were advised that there was to be no reduction in front-lines officers for the area. The future location and timing of moves of officers could not be confirmed at this stage however it was confirmed that the current site is to be sold. It was also confirmed that Nailsea Neighbourhoods team will be moving by April 2017 and a decision has not yet been made on location. It was reinforced that there is to be no change in numbers of front-line officers. A decision on the Chard station is not anticipated for the next two to three years.
- The panel requested that more detail be circulated on the operation of the custody pod in conjunction with the changes at Yeovil.
- The panel question if the police were engaged in project similar to One Public Estate in Mendip and it was confirmed that similar projects are occurring in North Somerset and in Bristol at Southmead as part of a national scheme.

9. Tri-Force Collaboration Programme

The panel received an update from the Commissioner which advised that the Tri-Force Enabling Service collaboration has been discontinued and this was unanimous decision by all three forces.

Avon and Somerset will continue to work closely with other authorities and in the future the Tri-Force may be re-commenced but the current project has been drawn to a close.

The panel expressed disappointment that the project is not progressing but agreed with the rationale for the decision. The panel emphasised the need to continue working closely with surrounding forces and also other sectors.

10. Standing Complaints Report (Pages 31 - 33)

Resolved – that the report be noted.

11. Work Programme Report (Pages 34 - 35)

Resolved – that the report be noted.

12. Complaints Protocol (Pages 36 - 38)

Resolved – protocol agreed by the panel.

13. Link Member Reports

To receive updates from Link Members. The panel received the following updates:

- Link members were impressed following a visit to the police call centre and urged all panel members to visit.
- Link members advised that they are ready to engage on cyber-crime but are awaiting the formal briefing to the panel. It was recognised that this is a national and international issue and so there may be limitations on what can be done locally
- The Chair raised the need to share more information with the public in regards fraud and cyber scams. The Commissioner directed the panel to Action Fraud: <http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/>. All members agreed to promote this via the appropriate channels. It was also noted that banks don't automatically notify the police of fraud and this is trying to be encouraged.

14. Date of next meeting

8th February 2016 – 10.30 – 1.00pm

15. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Recommended - that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the following item, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended).

16. Complaint Update

Resolved – no update required.