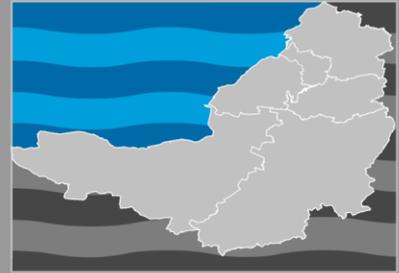


Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel



Hosted by North Somerset Council



MINUTES

Wednesday 8th February 2017

1. Apologies for absence

Cllr Ann Bown and Cllr Martin Wale

2. Public Forum

One statement submitted by David Redgewell, (South West Transport Network),
No public forum attendees

3. Declarations of Interest

No declaration of interest

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

Minutes were agreed as a correct record

5. Chairman's Business

- The chair highlighted the need to agree the future clerking of the Panel as a priority and it was agreed that officers in Bristol and Somerset would progress this.
- It was agreed that Councillor Dino Romero from BANES will be the link member for vulnerability.
- Members fed back on a positive visit to the arms site and thanked the relevant officers involved.
- It was agreed that a visit by the Panel to the constabulary call centre would be explored.

6. 2017/18 Precept, Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan (Pages 14 - 40)

- Members were asked to consider and vote on the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) proposals for the 2017/18 precept, 2017/18 budget and draft Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and draft capital programme for the 5 year period until 2021/11.
- This included the PCC proposal, to increase the police council tax precept by 1.99%, resulting in an average council tax level of £181.81 – an average annual increase of £3.55 pence. Officers advised that a survey of other treasurers reveals that the majority of Commissioners are adopting the same increase as Avon and Somerset, with one PCC opting for a freeze. No other areas are holding a referendum to increase above this amount.



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- It was noted that the Panel had been regularly briefed on the budget position through-out 2016-17. Officers confirmed that the budget is based upon the final Minister's grant statement and the final numbers have not changed from those shared with the Panel on 15th December 2016.
 - The Panel questioned the costs associated to the fleet. Officers advised that this is due to timing of cyclical investment costs however they advised that the PCC office is questioning the forecast amount as unit costs have decreased and the fleet size is decreasing. The Panel questioned whether new options for fleet management are being considered including working with local government on joint procurement and were advised that constraints on procurement nationally made this problematic but that different models were being explored. Electric cars are being piloted at Bridewell but the costs are currently too high for a wider roll-out. It was agreed that the Commissioner will continue to keep the Panel regularly updated on the progression of the fleet and associated costs.
 - The Commissioner advised that in April 2017 it is hoped that the details of the new funding arrangement will be made available and that it is likely to be an overhaul of all historic funding methods. There was concern expressed by the Panel and by the Commissioner as to how the new funding arrangements will be applied in practice. The Commissioner has been advised by ministers that there will be forces who will benefit and those who will be disadvantaged but at this time there is no further information. It was agreed that Cllr Ashton (Chair) and Cllr Weston will act as the link members tracking the funding formula progression and impact.
 - The Panel queried the impact of the apprenticeship levy. The Commissioner advised that this had not had any substantial impact in terms of financial savings. The force will be exploring running a two year apprenticeship followed by a two year degree course and are in procurement discussions with education providers. The Panel questioned if this will be available to existing members of staff and to civilian staff working for the force. It was advised at this time that it can only be used for new police officers coming into the force.
 - Panel members asked for clarification on the allocation of savings and the spend on enabling services. It was requested that the forecast for capital receipts be included in the details on the estate rationalisation programme.
 - It was requested that the borrowing costs be set out in figures as opposed to percentages. Panel members stressed the importance of finding the best balance in the length of time funding assets and when to draw down the funding.
 - The Panel moved to the vote to support the 2017-18 police precept.

Voting results

13 in favour

3 abstain

2 non-present

The vote was therefore carried in favour of supporting the precept

7. Commissioner's Update Report (Pages 41 - 48)

The Criminal Justice Project

- The initial report is due back on Friday 10th February with a final report due at the end of March. The Commissioner advised that there had been positive engagement from a wide range of partners.

Child Sexual Exploitation

- Request to bring a report to the next Panel meeting with an accompanying video on grooming.

Cybercrime

- Annex A set out the work done to date. Two new roles are being explored including one prevention officer working with Action Fraud and the National Crime Agency. The Panel welcomed the update and noted the increased activity and reporting. The Panel reiterated their concerns about the prevalence and impact of cybercrime. A Panel member highlighted that nationally cybercrime appears to not have the same priority for tracking offenders as other crimes yet the financial cost to victims is high. The Commissioner noted this but highlighted that cybercrime is a national issue and more resources are needed at a national level.

14th January 2017 Taser incident in Bristol - a separate briefing note is attached as Appendix A to the minutes

- The Commissioner provided a summary of the incident advising that the incident is the subject of an IPCC investigation set out in the attached briefing note. The Panel praised the swift and proactive engagement of the force with the IPCC on this issue.
- Bristol Panel members fed back that Justice for Judah have indicated that they wish to ensure that the strength of feeling in the community be directed to increased engagement and participation on residents Panels.
- Panel members expressed concern that Taser usage appears to have increased and there was a concern about the health impacts and whether officers carried emergency equipment to respond. The Commissioner advised that the number of officers being trained has increased but Taser usage has not. Tests have been undertaken on individuals with pace-makers and other health conditions and the evidence indicates that Tasers do not have long-term health impacts. The main cause of injury is from individuals falling and receiving head injuries.
- The Panel raised that Thames Valley have defibrillators fitted into their fleet and requested that this be considered for Avon and Somerset with potential opportunities to work with NHS and drug companies on the costs. The Commissioner agreed to explore this but did highlight that costs and space may limit the scope for this.

Stay Safe Website

- The Commissioner reported that the Stay Safe website now includes a new text number dedicated to combating rural crime.

Police and Crime Bill - disciplinary system for former officers

- The Police and Crime Bill has received royal assent thus placing a duty to collaborate on all emergency services. This will be rolled out in 2018. The Act will extend the remit of the current

disciplinary system to former officers who were previously exempt. The Panel welcomed this however requested that the Commissioner explore how best to use resources when officers are under investigation and suspended from front-line duty. The speed of IPCC investigations was felt to be negatively impacting on the best use of resources. Panel Members also requested clarification on the process for the retention of pocket books which contain details retiring officers could potentially need if subject to investigation and highlighted the stressful impact of this on individuals. The Commissioner advised that they are exploring the best use of resources during investigations. Officers clarified that the final decision to suspend is with the force but the IPCC are consulted and their recommendation is usually followed. Cases are regularly reviewed.

Avon Fire Service

- It was noted that an independent investigation of the Avon Fire Service is due to commence shortly. It was questioned as to whether this could result in a disbanding of the authority and the Avon and Somerset Police force becoming responsible for the fire service. The Commissioner advised that currently legislation would prevent this.
- The Panel queried the progress on the co-location of the Avon Fire and Avon and Somerset Police Headquarters. The Commissioner confirmed that the police are leading on the preparation work with an anticipated move date in mid-summer (July/August) and this is on schedule.

Impact of Local Government cuts

- Concern was raised about the impact of cuts to local government funding and how this will impact upon the police, particularly in regards to youth services and prevention services. It was noted that the South Gloucestershire have withdrawn funding for PCSOs and Bristol are on course to make reductions.
- The Commissioner advised that there is well-established regular contact with Council Leaders in the region. The Commissioner's office remains strongly committed to neighbourhoods and community policing. It was highlighted that the future funding formula could impact on this but that until such time there would be no change.
- It was acknowledged by the Panel and Commissioner that the longer term impact of local government cuts and the impact of the new funding formula could not be predicted at this time.

Action Fraud

- The Panel raised concerns about Action-Fraud and a perceived lack of updating to their services and a lack of communication between teams. The Commissioner advised that a Police and Crime Commissioner now sits upon the national board to help improve oversight by Commissioners.

Handing in weapons

- A Panel member questioned the current process of handing in-weapons, specifically in rural areas, and fed back that it was off-putting to members of the public handing in legitimate weapons such as hunting shot-guns. The Commissioner noted this and requested Panel members contact the Commissioner's office directly with any concerns.

Travel Assistance for vulnerable individuals

- The issue of vulnerable individuals having difficulties travelling back home from police stations was raised in the context of the Bristol Taser incident. Panel members highlighted concerns about costs

particularly for individuals travelling distances not well served by public transport.

- The Commissioner advised that individuals considered vulnerable should have arrangements made by officers to ensure they are transported home safely. In some stations this includes vouchers for taxis. The specifics of the case in Bristol will be discussed once the IPPC investigation is completed.

Public reporting channels

- There was discussion about the different access methods for the public needing to contact the police. Some Panel members were concerned that there is not sufficient locations for face-to-face reporting and that the use of local council reception spaces should be progressed. Other members felt that other channels were more suitable to try and limit the number of officers required to be desk-bound.
- The Commissioner advised that research indicates that the majority of the public prefer to use the phone with under 10% wanting to report issues face-to-face. The ongoing improvement work in the call centre has reduced the number of abandoned calls to 4% and the Commissioner's Office can track the performance of the call-centre at all times. In addition, permanent rather than one-off funding has been given to the switchboard to maintain performance. It was recommended by the Panel that more work could be done to increase the public perception of 101 to build confidence. The Panel agreed to explore a visit to the call centre to contribute to this and a number of Panel members praised the work of the call centre, specifically the triage of mental health cases.

County Lines

- There was feedback from a Panel member that in some areas uniformed officers have reported not receiving the necessary support from CID when tackling drugs offences. A number of Panel members reported receiving positive feedback from officers and praised the work underway stating that joined up working was providing reassurance. The Commissioner advised that County Lines is being treated as a high priority and significant investment is being targeted at this programme and the issue of CID support had not been raised with the Commissioner's Office.

Taunton Deane Police Station

- Members raised the location of Taunton Deane police station as an ongoing concern from citizens in the area and questioned the cost-benefits of moving the location. The Commissioner clarified that the change will result in savings and that a communications exercise was needed to promote the location of the current station in Taunton.

Hate Crime

- The topic of Hate Crime was briefly discussed and the Commissioner advised that they have started flagging misogynistic crime. It was noted that feedback from the domestic abuse forum in Taunton Deane on their engagement in the commissioning process was positive.
- Positive feedback was given by a Panel member on the Chief Constable's Facebook Live event.

Speed cameras

- Clarification was requested from the Commissioner's Office on the policy for speed cameras, specifically the reconnection and moving of cameras already installed. The Commissioner advised that a policy decision was taken to switch back on the existing cameras and the Commissioner's

Office would seek clarification over the installation of new cameras and/or moving of existing cameras. It was noted that that the approach to cameras differs across local authorities.

- The Commissioner outlined that the focus for the force is on education not enforcement and that they do not operate undercover units to target speeding. The force has nine vans and six motorcycles for overt activity funded by speed awareness generated income. An initiative is live involving a covert officer tackling unsafe overtaking of cyclists with the focus on safety.

8. Standing Complaints Report (Pages 49 - 51)

No new complaints for notification

9. Work Programme Report (Pages 52 - 53)

It was agreed that dates for the 2017-18 meetings to be circulated prior to the March Meeting.

10. Link Member Reports

Mental Health – a report from the Commissioner on the work of the triage teams is scheduled to come to the Panel in June 2017. Members advised that they have met the triage teams and will provide a briefing on their findings with some areas of recommendation and this be timed with the report from the commissioner.

Business Crime – positive feedback on the regular business crime forums. Members reported some concerns with Operation Heron but they anticipate these will be alleviated shortly.

Cyber Crime – an agenda item for the March 2017 meeting

Diverse Recruitment – members are meeting with the PCC team to identify a work programme and will report back in March 2017.

11. Date of next meeting

15th March 2017 – 10.30 – 1.30pm (Pre meet from 10am)

12. Exclusion of the Press and Public

13. Complaints Update

The complaints sub-committee members discussed and agreed a response to one live complaint.