

Police & Crime Panel – Minutes

15th March 2017

1. Apologies for absence

- Councillor Richard Brown
- Bryony Ball
- Councillor Heather Goddard
- Councillor Roz Willis

2. Public Forum

Statement received from South West Transport Network on proposed closure of the British Transport Police station at Bath Spa to Police and Crime Panel 15th March 2017

3. Declarations of interest

None advised

4. Minutes of previous meeting

It was highlighted that Modern.Gov appears to be putting numbers on papers out of sync with the minutes and this is to be explored with Modern.Gov.

5. Chairman's Business

The Chair advised members that the clerking support will be moving to Somerset Council as soon as possible and this was welcomed by the committee.

6. Child Sexual Exploitation

Panel members received a briefing on the approach to tackling Child Sexual Exploitation in Avon and Somerset, progress of the West of England Child Sexual Exploitation Service and viewed a video; Kayleigh's love story; on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) which provided an introduction to the topic and also highlighted the impact upon victims.

Panel members raised the following:

- Panel Members were encouraged to contact their Local Safeguarding Children's Board to request sight of the CSE profile for their local area to aide a wider understanding of at-risk areas. Concern was expressed that profiles had not to date been disseminated or used to their full advantage.
- Panel Members questioned why videos similar to Kayleigh's story are not being shared more widely. The Commissioner advised that there has been an increase in awareness campaigns but that more needs to be done. It was suggested that training for other sectors (schools, councils etc.) should be supplemented by similar videos. It was advised that Bristol have been actively doing this and that Chelsea's choice is a drama being promoted: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bAo8Yly8rFk>
- It was noted that Somerset have a guide for taxis on how to recognise CSE and this should be shared across the region. It was noted that taxi drivers may have visibility of CSE (e.g. picking up young adults at night) and there is a need to involve taxi drivers and the night-time economy businesses in the work to prevent and tackle CSE. The need to work with Uber and other transport providers was also highlighted. Panel members flagged concerns about the lack of a national database on taxi

drivers to track the allocation of licences with a view that licences are being awarded to individuals not from the local authority area who may pose a risk. The Commissioner confirmed that they will investigate further but could not commit to supporting a national database at this time but commented that it did seem on the surface a positive suggestion. It was questioned as to whether CSE is part of all schools' sexual education programmes. It was advised that sexual education (PSHE) is mandatory for children but that parents can withdraw their children from the programme. Panel members suggested that schools should also focus on staying safe online. It was noted that some schools are very pro-active in this area but this is not universal and could be improved.

- Panel members queried the level of support available for officers dealing with CSE cases and were advised that this is being monitored carefully.
- It was highlighted that if businesses etc. are empowered on issues like Anti-Social Behaviour then that will enable the police to focus upon issues like CSE.
- A Panel member raised the issue of CSE in wealthier areas and the risk of victims not being identified due to a lack of awareness in communities but also the targeting of limited resources into more deprived areas. Officers advised that children in care are approximately fifty times more likely to be targeted but that work is being done across the whole population but that this issue should be noted and considered further. It was advised that pilot Operation Topaz is due to run for a further six months and a decision about this continuing is required.
- Panel members queried the routes through which cases are being brought to light. Officers advised that there are increasing numbers being identified by public sector workers and other sectors but that there is still room for improvement for example building on practices such as talking to budget hotels.
- The issue of 'sexting' and the increased use of digital technology was highlighted and it was noted that many internet providers are very good at removing images/videos but that there is more that can be done and this is a priority for the government. It was again noted that this is a cross-sector/agency issue. Panel members also flagged the need to work across international boundaries.
- Panel members raised the idea of reaching out to social housing providers due to the regular contact housing officers often have with families and vulnerable young adults. It was noted that there is a risk of victims becoming perpetrators without support. Officers advised that housing is a key area and that the barriers of working across sectors have been raised by the Commissioner with MPs.

7. Cyber Crime

Panel members received an update on the work on cybercrime in the region. The following points were highlighted:

- The Commissioner paid tribute to the work of the panel who have been assisting with this agenda.
- The Commissioner to share the Digital Investigation and Prevention strategy and associated action plan to panel members.
- Work is ongoing with Get Safe Online who have a wide range of resources - <https://www.getsafeonline.org/> Examples of materials available, including leaflets and posters, were shared with Panel Members.

A link member verbal update was provided on cybercrime and the panel were advised that a formal link member report will be provided for the next meeting.

The following points were put forward by the panel:

- It was recommended that a summit for small business be held to help raise awareness and involve Business West and the Federation of Small Businesses. It was noted that a similar event had been held in Taunton last year, with input from Zephyr, the Regional Cyber Crime team.
- The Commissioner advised that banks are not always advising national agencies of cases of cyber fraud and this is potentially hiding the scale and preventing investigation.
- The panel recognised the importance of tackling social isolation via digital inclusion being balanced with exposing individuals to risk and that more needs to be done across sectors, like social housing, to ensure safety online is promoted and help people to understand the importance of password protection for example. It was suggested that highlighting high profile cases could help raise awareness. The Commissioner highlighted that there is often a lack of caution due to the reliance on the internet in every day life.
- The panel members noted that councillors have a role to reinforce messages within local authorities and help gain increased access into schools.

8. Commissioners Update Report

The following points were highlighted by the Commissioner:

- The Commissioner is the deputy national lead on efficiency on the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners Criminal Justice Standing Group. The Commissioner outlined progress on the Criminal Justice Transformation Project, a review to transform the local criminal justice system, following a successful bid to the Home Office Police Transformation Fund.
- The Commissioner updated the Panel on a whole system review of s136 mental health provision in the Avon and Wiltshire area, facilitated by the Alexander Group. A meeting will be held on 30 May to agree next steps. The Commissioner thanked panel members for their link report on mental health and advised it was of value to the work underway on mental health.
- Advertising is underway to recruit representatives to the new the scrutiny of police powers panel, being established by the Commissioner.
- The panel were asked to promote that there is a shadowing scheme to increase greater diversity of PCC candidates.
- The current Chief Constable's contract has been extended for three years.

Panel Members raised the following points:

- The panel highlighted a number of incidents of drowning that have occurred in the region and that young male students seem at particular risk. The Commissioner praised the role of the fire service in aiding search and rescue in these cases and highlighted the need for multiple agencies to be involved in searching for missing persons. Panel members asked if the general public are used to assist and officers advised that social media is used in such cases, particularly amongst students. Promoting river safety and working with the universities was raised by the panel and the need for greater understanding of the causes of such cases. The Commissioner advised that there is work underway with the universities and student liaison. Until the inquest concludes the Commissioner advised it was not appropriate to speculate on the causes of individual cases.
- Panel members thanked the Commissioner for taking up the issue of the cost of GP letters to support legal aid applications in Domestic Abuse cases.

- Panel member raised the issue of officers being investigated in regards restraint and the use of this in another Force area. The Commissioner agreed to report back on this matter with regard to the position in Avon and Somerset.

9. Standing Complaints report

It was agreed that a sub-committee of the panel will undertake an audit of complaints after the June meeting.

10. Work Programme

The work programme to be agreed at the panel's AGM. The following items were put forward:

- The use of body cameras
- Follow up report on mental health – link member report
- Details on the scrutiny panel
- New funding model for policing
- Cyber Crime – link member report

11. Link Member Reports

Cyber Crime- verbal

Following today's briefing a follow-up report will be produced on cyber crime

Diverse recruitment - verbal

- It was highlighted that 2% of police officers are from the BME community and 5% of PSCOs and therefore more is needed to be done. The link member is involved in supporting work to map current police jobs, linking employment and vacancy opportunities, exploring use of other languages and rejuvenating the current schemes. It was noted that the Bristol Taser case may have had a detrimental impact and that a strong and strategic programme is needed to increase numbers. It was flagged that there is a perception of unconscious bias in some interviews. The Commissioner requested details of any cases for further investigation and advised that the application process is blind as a precaution against bias. It was also advised the current buddying and mentoring scheme runs through all levels of the force. A citizen academy programme is underway, with a new programme starting in May, to help create ambassadors for the police.
- A panel member flagged apparent differences in recruitment across forces. The Step Up programme was highlighted by a panel member as programme to help increase diversity across the public sector and details will be shared across the other authorities. It was noted that Bridgwater College is running a 999 course to help students gain an insight into the emergency services to help promote the emergency services as a career choice.
- The Commissioner advised that the Chief Constable is the diversity champion for the constabulary.

Mental Health - written report

- The report to be recirculated to members to provide updated funding details. The report provided an overview and insight into how police aim to support and deal with individual with mental health needs, specifically those brought into custody.

- Specific points raised included:
 - Officers had reported concerns with Section 136 cases and what restrictions applied.
 - It was noted that work in this area is ongoing and that provision of services is mixed across the region and there is potential for accessing sources of government funding.
 - It was agreed that there will be a follow up report.

12. Date of next meeting

27th June 2017, 10.00 pre meeting, 10.30-2pm.

Venue: The Rickford Room, Town Hall, Walliscote Grove Road, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 1UJ.

13. 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).

14. Complaint update

Resolved - no update required