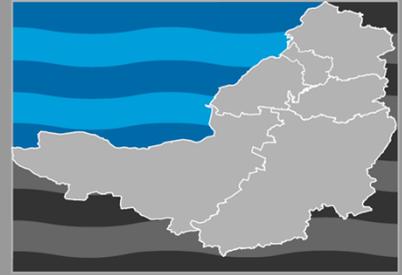


Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel



Hosted by Bristol City Council Democratic Services



Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel Thursday 16th June 2016 at 11.00am

Weston Town Hall, Walliscote Road, Weston-Super-Mare

Councillor Members Present:-

Nigel Ashton (Chairman), Ann Bown, Lisa Brett, Richard Brown, Asher Craig, Stuart Dowding, John Parham, Afzal Shah, Mark Shelford, Martin Wale, Jane Warmington, Roz Willis.

Independent Members Present:-

Bryony Ball, Joseph Mullis, Andrew Sharman.

Officers in attendance:-

Patricia Jones – Clerk/Complaints Officer

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

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Goddard, Councillor Weston and Councillor Drew.

2. Election of Chair

It was moved by Councillor Willis, seconded by Councillor Dowding and on being put to the vote, unanimously:-

RESOLVED - that Councillor Nigel Ashton be elected as Chairman of the Police and Crime Panel for the 2016/17 municipal year.

3. Election of Vice-Chair

It was moved by Andrew Sharman, seconded by Councillor Shah and on being put to the vote, unanimously:-



RESOLVED - that Councillor Richard Brown be elected as Vice-Chair of the Police and Crime Panel for the 2016/17 municipal year.

4. Membership of the Committee

Members of the Panel noted the guidance in the report relating to composition and the balanced appointments objective.

There was general agreement that the nominations provided by the component authorities remained within tolerable limits of the balanced appointments objective.

RESOLVED - that the following membership of the Panel be agreed for 2016/20 subject to any significant change in the political balance on the councils in future elections:-

Conservative – 11

Liberal Democrat – 2

Labour – 1

Labour – 1 (Elected Mayor Representative)

5. Public Forum

No Public Forum statements or questions were received.

6. Declarations of Interest

The following declarations were received:-

Councillors Bown – Member of the Devon and Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service

Councillor Shelford – Member of the Avon Fire and Rescue Service

7. Ratification of Independent Member appointments

Following preliminary discussion at the pre-meeting, the Panel:-

Resolved – that the decision of the interview panel be endorsed and Bryony Ball and Joseph Mullis be appointed as Independent Members of the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel for a 4 year term commencing 16th June 2016.

8. Future Meeting dates

Resolved – that the following meeting dates be agreed:-

20th September

21st October (training for new members)

23rd November (Budget training and PCNA session for all members at Police Headquarters)

15th December

8th February

15th March

(Panel meetings to take place at 11.00am Weston Town Hall. Time of pre-meeting subject to business)

9. Host Authority Arrangements 2016/2020

The Chairman summarised the outcome of the Panel's discussions at the pre-meeting.

Resolved - that the transfer of the Host Authority and officer support arrangements to North Somerset Council be finalised in line with the decisions reached by the Panel relating to:-

- **additional officer support to the Panel; and**
- **the finalisation of an LA funding mechanism/indemnity agreement to facilitate a recharge of any costs associated with the running of the Panel over and above the current Home Office funding (£70,000).**

10. Minutes of the meeting held on 8th February 2016

Resolved – that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 14th March 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

11. Chairman's Business

It was agreed that Panel Member contact details would be circulated.

12. Commissioner's Update Report

The Commissioner summarised her report as follows:-

- Since the election, the Commissioners and Chief Constables of Avon and Somerset, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire had met to discuss collaborative opportunities in the areas of enabling services and existing specialist operations collaborations. A Tri-Force Collaboration Programme had subsequently replaced the former Strategic Alliance. Significant savings were needed to reinvest and strengthen local Policing teams.
- Efforts to improve workforce representation was now a key work area - less than 3% of the workforce are from BME backgrounds.
- Funding for the West of England child sexual exploitation victim identification and support service would end in March 2017. Additional resources would be needed to maintain a focus on this area of work and discussions to address this were already underway.
- Panel input would assist in the development of the Police and Crime Plan.
- From 1st June 2016 2016, people taken into Police custody under section 136 of the Mental

Health Act would not be detained in a Police cell unless the circumstances were exceptional. This milestone follows work with CCG colleagues and investment in a control room triage pilot which will assign mental health professionals to the Police control room to provide advice and support to police officers and partner agencies.

- The Panel was referred to the LA funding allocations for partnership work in community safety and youth justice set out in the report.
- Applications to the Commissioner's Community Action Fund were now invited –deadline 1st September.

Below is a summary of the questions/issues raised by Panel members:-

- The Commissioner was asked if any practical steps were being taken in respect of collaboration/integration with Avon Fire Authority. The Commissioner reported that space had been made available at Police Headquarters for AFA staff and members to enable closer working. Co-location in itself would deliver greater collaboration but as yet AFA had not signed up to any specific forms of collaboration.

It was noted that the Commissioner also aimed to collaborate and share mutual interests with Devon and Somerset Fire Authority where appropriate. Both AFA and DSFA were engaged in discussion around the new emergency services mobile communications programme which would provide a new communication system for the 3 emergency services.

It was emphasised that the sharing of estates was the obvious place to realise improvements in service and resilience and to secure savings.

- The Panel welcomed the move to a triage approach in cases involving detainees with mental health issues. The move away from cell detention following arrest was unanimously supported.
- The Commissioner was invited to comment on the outcomes emerging from the Recruitment Advisory Group set up 3 years ago to look at workforce representation.

It was reported that recommendations emerging from the group had been implemented in the Constabulary's processes. Unfortunately, the position had deteriorated further and this work area was now a top tier priority with investment in an outreach group led by Norman Pascal, set up to mentor specific communities including Eason and Lawrence Hill. The aim was to increase the number of BME applications, provide assistance through the recruitment process and offset the advantage of applications from policing families. Tangible results were anticipated this time. It was acknowledged that PCSOs also struggled to get through the recruitment process.

Asked how performance in this area would be benchmarked, the Commissioner confirmed she was in discussion with Chief Constable Marsh around aspirations. It had been recognised that the Constabulary was behind the curve and the agreed strategy would be reported to the Panel in due course. It was emphasised that a fall-back position was not

part of the plan - this was an area the force was determined to make a difference in. The Commissioner would be meeting with Marvin Rees to discuss how contact with Black organisations could be improved.

- The Commissioner discussed her new priorities and plans for the future. The Panel heard that strengthening local policing teams was a key element of the approach. Teams were under-resourced and crimes affecting local residents (anti-social behaviour, burglary) required increase focus including and the Police more accessible.

As part of this, it was noted that a Communities Pledge would be introduced setting out what could be expected from the Constabulary – for example, attendance at PACT meetings was compulsory but not attendance at Parish Council meetings because of their frequency. The introduction of the Community Pledge was welcomed especially for those areas without PACT meetings.

The Commissioner stated that people, culture and the promotion of trust were key factors in a successful policing strategy. Body worn video to protect communities and assist with prosecutions, the expansion of the PCC role within the complaints system, the developing role of the PCC within the criminal justice system and increased collaboration with partners, would together deliver a better service. The Commissioner advised the Panel that she was mindful that training was a key part to success and that she had personal oversight of the training and development portfolio.

It was accepted that these assurances encompassed a broad range of activities and work would be carried out to condense where appropriate.

- Reference was made to the recent efforts of the Metropolitan Police to increase diversity amongst its ranks. The workforce was now reported to be 33% representative of its communities.
- The Panel emphasised the importance of a Police officer's core operational responsibilities. The point was made that uniformed policing of the force area was the main expectation of many constituents and therefore should be a priority. It was suggested that reference to this fundamental role should form an opening statement or introduction to the Police and Crime Plan.
- The Panel highlighted a lack of engagement with Neighbourhood Watch and volunteers in some areas. The Commissioner was also advised that relevant information was not being consistently disseminated. It was reported that information should be pushed to NW Co-ordinators on a monthly basis via a new website and Wendy Hull was leading on the introduction of a NW Association, working closely with ACC Sarah Crew to give the service a boost.
- 6 additional staff had been recruited to the 101 call system and the Commissioner understood the position to be much improved. She indicated that she was keen to hear about any delays currently being experienced.
- It was put to the Commissioner that rural policing was being neglected resource wise with competing demands taking priority.

- Attention was drawn to a project led by Geofutures, a Bath based firm specialising in spatial data analysis and mapping. The project aimed to develop an approach to assist in understanding local area vulnerability to gambling related harm - a number of at risk groups had been identified including children, adolescents, young adults and people with mental health issues. It was reported that a presentation from Geofutures would be beneficial as this approach would allow the Police and local authorities to use targeted intervention to prevent harm and provided an evidence base of risk when issuing licenses.
- The Commissioner was invited to consider how the Constabulary could benefit from forming a relationship Somerset Armed Forces Covenant Committee, an organisation in a position to assist with issues involving military PTSD. It was recognised that officers were often required to make immediate decisions when faced with a problem, but it was felt there was could be mutual benefit to signposting people to this organisation.
- Following on from the HMIC PEEL assessment, the Commissioner was asked how she intended to progress partnership work to improve outcomes for vulnerable people.

The Commissioner stated that this could involve a range of activities but most required buy-in from the LAs. She drew attention to the difficulty in securing the initial Home Office funding. It was confirmed that Interim Assistant Chief Constable Kay Wozniak was now leading on this work.

John Smith CEO added that the funding to support victims would continue and there were plans to reinvest in the Constabulary's investigative capacity and standards in response to the HMIC findings. The Chief Constable had already commenced work in this area. It was acknowledged that the quality of investigations was just as important as finding ways to deal with increased demand, and inevitably this would require training.

The Panel noted that only 1 in 8 children were reporting CSE offences.

- The Panel pointed out that LAs were still involved in preventative work around crime and community safety but no longer enjoyed the cost benefits of Community Safety Grant funding which was now allocated by PCCs. Whilst there were very good examples of information sharing, it was rare to see pooled budgets and joint working. The LGA was currently looking at the success of whole place community budgets which allowed a broad range of partners to agree common outcomes, pool resources and join up activities to achieve those outcomes. Essex Council had achieved considerable success in tackling domestic violence this way but it was only happening in limited areas.

It was suggested that PCCs and the LGA could usefully work together on innovative approaches to deliver savings and better services.

The Commissioner stated that the development of a joint LA/Police community plan would bring considerable gains.

- Whilst the work around BME representation was welcomed as a positive step, the Commissioner was advised that only gatekeepers of the BME community had been invited to a recent meeting to discuss this topic and specifically no females were present. It was

emphasised that work around inclusion and diversity in the service would require patience and encouragement. It was suggested that initiatives developed in other areas had made successful in-roads to BME progression in the workforce.

Referencing the Direct Entry Scheme which provided a fast track for development and progression through the ranks, the Commissioner agreed that role models were needed throughout the organisation. She felt that progress in this area would be an uphill task for the Constabulary and invited the Panel to provide assistance where possible.

- The Panel reported that small businesses were being detrimentally affected by a lack of visible policing. The Commissioner stated that this was one of the consequences of having 700 fewer Police officers in post and drew attention to the possibility of more cuts in the future. It was suggested helpful advice could be sought from the Business Crime Forum.
- A refreshed Estates Strategy would be communicated in the near future in an effort to reinforce the message behind the closure and rationalisation of Police stations and emphasise the benefits of shared facilities.
- The Panel heard that staff training and initiatives were in place around dementia awareness, and this was welcomed.
- It was reported that legal aid applications relating to domestic violence prosecutions required the victim to provide a certified GP note at a cost of £80 to the victim. There was general agreement that this was an unsurmountable hurdle for some women in a crisis situation with added potential to put the victim back in harm's way. The Commissioner agreed and committed to look at this.
- It was clarified that Police staff could access a programme of counselling without going through staff hierarchy.
- It was reported that multi-agency raids and welfare checks on premises involving potential victims of trafficking worked well in the Southwest. Unseen had attended a number of these raids and was encouraged by the effectiveness of a multi-agency approach. It was suggested that Sari/Victim Support could work with the Police in a similar way to offer feedback on the treatment and support of vulnerable victims from a victim's perspective. The Commissioner confirmed that the OPCC had an on-going valuable relationship with Sari.

Resolved:-

- (1) Strategy to improve workforce representation to be shared with the Panel when agreed.**
- (2) Councillor Parham to provide the Commissioner with details of the issues raised around Neighbourhood Watch/dissemination of information and the 101 call service.**
- (3) The Commissioner to report back on enquiries relating to the cost of a GP note for legal aid purposes in circumstances involving domestic violence.**

13. Annual Report

The Panel considered a report setting out details of the Commissioner's functions in each financial year and progress made in meeting the objectives set out in the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan. The annual report (attached at Annex A) detailed progress made between April 2015 and March 2016.

It was recognised that the previous report/discussions had addressed a number of issues emerging from this report. Below is a summary of questions and issues raised by Panel Members:-

- There was a general acceptance that Performance required improvement. Burglary was considered a good example and would receive increased focus. The Constabulary was alert to the need to deliver on the Police and Crime Plan and time would be invested over the summer to develop the plan accordingly. Whilst some reporting had increased dramatically including third party reporting, the Commissioner stated poor performance would not be defended.
- It was noted that only 6 out of 100 burglary offences resulted in resolution. It was suggested that this would impact on public confidence in the service and deter people from reporting. The Commissioner stated that the Constabulary had over-promised in the past and was now working hard to manage expectation. Cases could not progress without forensic evidence and it was not always possible for the Police to attend the scene of a burglary working on the basis of threat, harm and risk. The point was made that unless the Police attended it was not possible to gather the evidence required.

The Commissioner maintained that the Police attended 90% of cases. Councillor Parham agreed to provide the Commissioner with specific details to the contrary.

The Panel drew attention to work by Kent Police in use of technology to tackle burglary. It was reported that in Avon and Somerset, similar work is in underway, including through predictive analytics.

It was noted that Early Intervention as part of the Troubled Families Programme had been extremely successful in reducing crime/incidents of anti-social behaviour. The successful approach to multi-agency information sharing in the Bristol Troubled Families programme was highlighted.

- The Commissioner was asked to reassure the Panel on the Constabulary's approach to Leadership going forward and how it would become the active issue it needed based on the HMIC findings. The Commissioner reported that the Chief Constable had already made a difference with roadshows, talks and investment in training. It had been recognised that leadership needed to be embedded from the top - training the hierarchy was key to changing culture. Treating staff fairly, improving morale, and celebrating achievements were also important factors but the Chief Constable needed time to effect the change needed.

Asked about specific plans to improve morale and instil confidence in the force (thereby retaining talent and experience), the Commissioner stated that cuts at senior officer level and reduced opportunities for promotion were sometimes the reasons for officer migration into other professions. The point was made that a lack of career development would therefore continue to work against efforts to retain staff.

- The Panel noted the reduction in the number of Special Constables. The employee supported policing scheme provided a mechanism for volunteers but it was evident from the numbers that the role needed to be made more attractive.
- The clerk agreed to circulate details of the new powers available to PCSOs. It was noted that the Panel's concern emerged from the impact on the wider public and confidence in the service if certain duties were no longer being carried out.
- It was confirmed that the process delays associated with new Community Behaviour Orders had been resolved.
- The Commissioner was commended on her approach to Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE) and continuing efforts to make this a statutory part of the curriculum.
- Based on the summary of current performance at page 59 of the report, the Commissioner was asked how the ambition for top 10 status could be realistically achieved for offences involving domestic violence and sexual abuse.

The Panel discussed performance against the SSO Fully Resolved rate. The strong focus on taking victims seriously and increasing confidence to report has seen an increase in reporting of historic cases and 3rd party reporting which are less likely to be fully resolved. Avon and Somerset has one of the highest levels of prosecutions for SSO cases. Whilst significant progress has been made in victim focus amongst police and CJ agencies, work is ongoing to raise awareness among the judiciary and people undertaking jury service to challenge 'myths' and 'victim blaming' that have a detrimental impact on outcomes in court.

- It was noted that Amy Hurst was the OPCC Lead Officer for youth engagement. Work included focus groups and a Youth Independent Advisory Group. There were now 230 Police cadets and the Commissioner stated that she was working closely with schools to increase BME representation. The aim was to recruit in those areas with a large BME community and a new unit about to open at the City Academy in Bristol.
- The Commissioner informed the Panel that Honour Based Violence falls under the umbrella of vulnerability. Whilst there was no dedicated team, significant work was underway in this area as a result of the HMIC inspection.

Resolved:-

- (1) Councillor Parham to provide the Commissioner with details relating to incidences of non-attendance of the Police following reports of burglary.**

(2) New PCSO powers to be circulated to the Panel.

14. Police and Crime Plan

The Panel considered a report setting out the Commissioner's statutory requirements in relation to the production of a Police and Crime Plan and the requirement to develop a strategic plan for the second term of office which would replace the current plan. It was noted that this would be formally presented to its next meeting on 20th September 2016.

In advance of this, attention was drawn to the high level priorities set out in the report for initial consideration.

Resolved:- that Link Member roles be agreed to assist with the development of the plan in the following priority areas:-

Initial development of the Police and Crime Panel – Councillor Craig
BME representation – Councillor Craig and Councillor Shah
Mental Health – Councillor Willis and Joseph Mullis
Cyber Crime – Councillor Parham and Councillor Shah
Vulnerability – Councillor Brett
Tri Force Collaboration Project – Councillor Weston

15. Tri Force Collaboration Task Group

The Panel noted that Councillor Weston and the clerk attended a briefing at County Hall Trowbridge on 7th June 2016. The Panel's attention was drawn to the report circulated subsequently to members setting out the potential scope of a Tri-Force Collaboration Programme (now including Gloucestershire Constabulary).

The Panel noted next steps would include:-

- An initial meeting of the Chairs of the Avon and Somerset, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panels, to discuss the objectives and terms of reference of a Joint Scrutiny Task Group.
- Joint Task Group (all task group members) to meet mid-July to discuss the final list of options emerging from a meeting of the 3 PCCs and Chief Constables on 11th July 2016.

In conclusion, the Panel,

Resolved:-

- (1) That the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel appoints a Scrutiny Task Group to align with the Wiltshire and Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panels in scrutinising the Tri-Force Collaboration Programme**
- (2) That the following membership be agreed - Councillor Ashton, Councillor Brown, Councillor Wale, Councillor Weston and Independent Member Andy Sharman.**
- (3) That the next steps be noted.**

16. Work Programme

Members noted the Panel Work Programme for 2016/17 in line with its core statutory responsibilities.

The Panel noted that the burglary scrutiny session deferred from the previous year would take place at its next meeting on 20th September 2016.

It was noted that a briefing from the Chief Constable would be deferred until the 15th December 2016.

Resolved – that the report be noted.

17. Standing complaints Report

The Panel considered and a report of the Chief Executive (OPCC) providing an oversight of all complaints made against the Commissioner.

It was noted that one complaint since the last report, had been escalated, handled and finalised by a Sub-Group of the Panel on 28th April 2016.

Resolved – that the report be noted.

18. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved - 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).

19. Complaint Update

(Exempt paragraph 1 – information relating to an individual)

The Panel was briefed on a complaint which was upheld by the Independent Police Complaints Commission following an appeal by the complainant.

20. Date of next Meeting

20th September 2016 at 11.00am (Weston Town Hall).

(The meeting ended at 1.40pm)