

**Minutes of the Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel
held on 18th March 2014**

Present:

Members of the Panel

Councillors:

Michael Coker	Warwick District Council
Nicola Davies	Warwickshire County Council
Dennis Harvey (Chair)	Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
Peter Fowler	Warwickshire County Council
Jenny Fradgley	Warwickshire County Council
Phillip Morris-Jones	Warwickshire County Council
Peter Morson	North Warwickshire Borough Council
Derek Poole	Rugby Borough Council
Gillian Roache	Stratford-upon-Avon District Council
June Tandy	Warwickshire County Council

Co-opted Independent members

Bob Malloy
Robin Verso (Vice Chair)

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Neil Hewison Chief Executive

Warwickshire County Council Officers

Georgina Atkinson Democratic Services Team Leader
Jane Pollard Governance Advisor

1. General

(1) Apologies

There were no apologies for absence.

(2) Members' Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Robin Verso declared a non-pecuniary interest; the nature of the interest being that he was the Chair of the Warwickshire Probation Trust.

(3) Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd February 2014

The Police and Crime Panel agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd February 2014 be signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

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With regard to 'Proposed Local Police Precept 2014/15', Neil Hewison, Chief Executive (Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner) advised that a large number of applications for the Commissioners Grant Scheme had been submitted. An evaluation criteria was currently being developed, which would be circulated to all applicants and would ensure that there was a transparent review and evaluation process to assessing each application. Neil Hewison explained that the need to rebalance the funding back to the Community Safety Partnerships had been acknowledged; however, this would be wholly dependent on the quality of the Partnerships' applications. An event would be organised to promote other funding streams, which may support those applicants that had been unsuccessful in the Community Safety Grant bid. Members were advised that the final decision on successful applications would be made by 3rd April 2014. Applications would also be considered in respect of the rural and cyber crime initiative, to identify those which would be more appropriately funded through this initiative, rather than the Commissioners Grant Scheme.

2. Public Engagement

Georgina Atkinson, Democratic Services Team Leader, presented members with proposals to increase public engagement in meetings of the Police and Crime Panel. Research had been undertaken to assess how public participation was encouraged by Police and Crime Panels across the country. From the research undertaken, it was apparent that Panels had either introduced a formal Public Participation Scheme, or were taking steps to introduce one in the near future. A number of those Panels had also extended the scheme to include questions to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Panel agreed that it was important to have the stipulation for questions to be submitted at least three working days in advance of the meeting, to allow sufficient time for an answer to be drafted for the meeting; however, it was also important to have flexibility within the scheme, to allow the Chair discretion to accept questions that were submitted after the three-day period for exceptional circumstances. Members also considered that statements from the public should be also be accepted, at the discretion of the Chair.

With regard to the inclusion of questions to the Police and Crime Commissioner, Neil Hewison advised that the Commissioner had been made aware of this proposal and would accept this invitation. He added that the public accountability meetings between the Commissioner and the Chief Constable had been improved to include an informal open surgery session, followed by a question time session, at which questions could be asked without prior notification. The meetings were also webcast. The last meeting, which had been held in North Warwickshire had a public attendance of 40-50 people.

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Members discussed the value of webcasting meetings of the Panel and requested that an assessment of the benefits, risks and costs be undertaken. Georgina Atkinson advised that webcasting capability would depend on the venue for each Panel meetings.

The Police and Crime Panel agreed to:

- 1) Approve the proposed Public Question Time Scheme for meetings of the Panel and that it be allocated as a standing item on each agenda;
- 2) Approve that the Public Question Time allow for questions to be asked of the Police and Crime Commissioner;
- 3) Remove the "in writing" stipulation for any questions submitted past the three-day window in exceptional circumstances;
- 4) Note the improvements to the Panel's web page and proposals for further enhancement;
- 5) Note the proposed methods, including the use of social media, to achieve wider promotion of the Panel and its scheduled meetings and that Community Forum meetings and Borough Council newsletters also be used for promotion; and
- 6) Request that an assessment of the benefits, risks and costs for webcasting meetings of the Panel be undertaken.

3. Police and Crime Panel Annual Report

The Police and Crime Panel was advised of the value of publishing an Annual Report which highlight the Panel's activity throughout the year and key outcomes that had been achieved. Georgina Atkinson advised that the document could be widely promoted in order to raise public awareness of the role of the Panel and what it had achieved for Warwickshire residents. Panel members could also be encouraged to present the Annual Report to their authority's Council meeting as a method of informing elected members.

The Police and Crime Panel agreed to:

- 1) The development of an Annual Report which will highlight activity throughout the year and outcomes achieved; and
- 2) Publish an Annual Report for 2013/14.

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4. Appointment of Sub-Panels

Georgina Atkinson reported that recent research by the Centre for Public Scrutiny had indicated that Police and Crime Panels across the country had met more frequently than the four times envisaged by the Home Office. This was thought to reflect the need for additional meetings in order to meet the extensive statutory requirements and key responsibilities. Since December 2012, the Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel had held ten formal meetings.

Members were advised that it was likely that the future work of the Panel would extend to include 'proactive' scrutiny, which would involve the investigation of issues of priority to both the local area and the Police and Crime Commissioner. It was therefore recommended that small Sub-Panels be appointed to transact the business required.

Georgina Atkinson explained that the delegation of responsibility to smaller groups of Panel members may provide a more effective way to complete the level of work required. Members noted that the Panel had already experienced some success in this approach with the establishment of the Budget Working Group in June 2013.

The Panel considered a proposal to appoint a Planning and Performance Working Group. The purpose of the Working Group would be to undertake a quarterly review of performance and risk monitoring reports against the Police and Crime Commissioner's priorities, as outlined in the Police and Crime Plan 2013-17. Neil Hewison advised that the Commissioner's Business Plan was currently being developed and, once finalised, would assist the Panel to assess planning and performance.

The Panel considered a proposal to appoint a Victims Services Commissioning Task and Finish Group. The purpose of the Working Group would be to review the commissioning of services in respect of victim support. Neil Hewison advised that a Policy Officer was currently working on this project and that there was the intention to schedule a Victims Summit in May, to which members of the Panel would be invited. A Commissioning Manager had been appointed by the Alliance to develop a Commissioning Framework across both Warwickshire and West Mercia. The Panel requested that the scoping document be prepared and presented to the next meeting, at which the Task and Finish Group would be appointed.

The Police and Crime Panel agreed to:

- 1) Appoint a Planning and Performance Working Group, with a membership of Councillor Peter Fowler, Bob Malloy and Councillor June Tandy*;
- 2) Request that the scoping document for the Victim Services Commissioning Task and Finish Group be prepared and presented to the next meeting;
and

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3) Adopt the Scoping Document for Task and Finish Group reviews.

*(*Post meeting administrative note – Robin Verso has also been appointed to the Planning and Performance Working Group)*

5. Work Programme 2014/15 and Future Meeting Dates

The Police and Crime Panel was advised that an informal meeting to discuss the Work Programme 2014/15 for the Police and Crime Panel was held on 21st January 2014. Georgina Atkinson advised that the Work Programme was a live document which would be updated following each meeting. Items may also be deferred or added to the Work Programme as considered necessary and agreed by the Chair of the Panel.

With regard to meeting venues, members were advised that at present the Panel held all formal meetings at Shire Hall, Warwick. There had been a suggestion that the Panel held its meetings across the county, in each of the member authority areas.

The Vice-Chair expressed his support for the Panel interacting with other bodies in order to consider their views in respect of the role and engagement of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Police and Crime Panel agreed to:

- 1) The proposed Work Programme for 2014/15;
- 2) Add an item to the Work Programme to review the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, in respect of structure and composition, in comparison to other Offices;
- 3) Hold future meetings at each of the six authority's Town/Civic Halls on a rotation basis;
- 4) Note the update on recommendations and actions previously requested by the Panel; and
- 5) The future meeting dates for 2014/15, as follows: 20th June, 18th July, 26th September, 21st November and 3rd February 2015.

6. Urgent Items

There were no urgent items on this occasion.

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7. Date of Next Meeting

The Panel noted that the next meeting had been scheduled for 20th June 2014 at Shire Hall, Warwick.

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.

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Chairman