

**Minutes of the Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel  
held on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2014**

**Webcast**

A webcast of this meeting is also available at:

<http://www.ustream.tv/channel/police-and-crime-panel>

**Present:**

**Members of the Panel**

**Councillors:**

Michael Coker	Warwick District Council
Nicola Davies	Warwickshire County Council
Peter Fowler	Warwickshire County Council
Dennis Harvey (Chair)	Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough 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**

Ron Ball	Police and Crime Commissioner
Cheryl Bridges	Policy and Research Officer
David Clarke	Treasurer
Neil Hewison	Chief Executive
Rebecca Parsons	Performance and Scrutiny Officer
Robert Phillips	Deputy Treasurer
Mina Sharma	Media and Communications Officer
Eric Wood	Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner

**Warwickshire and West Mercia Strategic Alliance**

Detective Inspector Jason Downes  
Chief Superintendent Martin McNevin

**Warwickshire County Council Officers**

Georgina Atkinson	Democratic Services Team Leader
Phil Evans	Head of Localities and Community Safety
Sarah Duxbury	Head of Law and Governance

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**Members of the public**

Jerry Pritchard, Chair of the North Independent Custody Visitors  
Diane Taulbut, Chair of the South Independent Custody Visitors

One member of the public (observing)

**1. General**

**(1) Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Jenny Fradgley (Warwickshire County Council).

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

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

**(3) Minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2014**

The Police and Crime Panel agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2014 be signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record, subject to the following amendment:

Item 3 - Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report 2014 (Page 5):

That the question raised by Councillor Morris-Jones had also referred to the provision of medical professionals at custody suites.

**2. Public Question Time**

There were no questions from the public on this occasion.

**3. Independent Custody Visitors**

The Police and Crime Panel received a presentation from the Chairs of the North and South Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs). Jerry Pritchard, Chair of the North ICVs referred to the report which summarised the role as undertaking unannounced visits to police stations to check on the welfare of people in police custody. Visits would be undertaken in pairs on a quarterly basis. He explained that there were 22 ICVs appointed – nine in the north and 13 in the south – who met on a monthly basis as an ICV Panel to discuss the requirements of the role, identify best practice and discuss learning opportunities. The Panel was informed that in addition to welfare checks, the ICVs could identify and report maintenance issues, which were mostly rectified within 24 hours.

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Jerry Pritchard explained that although the role was largely unknown, it was a critical part in ensuring that detainees were treated humanely, with respect and dignity. The detainee would be asked questions by the ICVs about their experience and how they had been dealt with. He reported that he had not encountered any problems in Warwickshire.

In response to a question raised, Jerry Pritchard informed the Panel that self-introduction was now being used but it was difficult to determine whether this had had an impact on the number of detainees seeking visits from ICVs. The contract which had been awarded to Prime Care for the provision of medical facilities and professionals at the custody suites stipulated that, if requested, a doctor must be in attendance within one hour of the request being made. To date, this had always been achieved.

Diane Taulbut, Chair of the South ICV, provided the Panel with an outline of the recruitment and training process for ICVs. This involved an interview and assessment process; successful candidates would need to demonstrate a sense of justice and the confidence to raise issues. Training would be provided through the Independent Custody Visiting Association and would be followed up with two training sessions per year, which was for all ICVs, in addition to regular Panel meetings. Jerry Prichard added that training for the ICVs had recently improved with the assistance of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Police and Crime Commissioner paid tribute to the ICVs for their work.

The Police and Crime Panel agreed to note the presentations and expressed its gratitude to the ICVs for their commitment to the role.

#### **4. Report of the Budget Working Group**

The Panel considered the report and minutes of the Budget Working Group meeting that had taken place on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2014. Robin Verso, who had chaired the meeting of the Working Group, referred to the minutes of the meeting and the key areas that had been discussed with regard to the Quarter 1 (2014/15) Budget Monitoring Report. The Panel was advised that the three key issues raised by the Working Group had been the level of projected underspend, the Capital Programme and the Reserves Strategy.

With regard to the projected underspend of £8.25 million across the Strategic Alliance, the Commissioner advised that the majority of that figure related to officer pay as a result of a higher turnover in police officers than anticipated. Both Police and Crime Commissioners had requested that this be addressed as a matter of urgency and a major recruitment campaign had commenced recently. He added that over the next 18 months, a maximum of 400 Police Officers could be recruited and trained. This was in addition to the ongoing campaign to recruit Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and Special Constables. David Clarke, Treasurer, added that the money would also be

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utilised to modernise the forces and the Chief Constables had been asked to come forward with proposals.

With regard to the Capital Programme, David Clarke explained that a weak planning process had resulted in projects being added to the Programme without insufficient assessment and consideration of timescales. As a result, the Programme experienced slippage which presented as an underspend. Henceforth, it was intended to revise the whole capital planning process.

David Clarke reported that since the meeting of the Budget Working Group, there had been a suggestion from HMIC (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary) that the level of grant cuts over the next four years would match those from the previous four years; this equated to in excess of £30 million for the Strategic Alliance. While further revenue cuts would be achieved, it was critical that capital projects, such as the integration of IT, were realised in order to effectively manage resources henceforth.

The Panel noted that the current membership of the Working Group was Councillor Morson, Councillor Roache and Robin Verso. To widen the Panel's engagement with the quarterly budget monitoring, it was suggested that the membership of the Working Group be increased to a maximum six members.

The Police and Crime Panel agreed to:

- 1) Note the report of the Budget Working Group meeting; and
- 2) Appoint Councillor Fowler to the Budget Working Group.

### **5. Report of the Police and Crime Commissioner**

The Police and Crime Commissioner provided the Panel with an outline of recent activity that had been undertaken since its last meeting. He commenced with an explanation of the HMIC report, which had been published in September 2014, regarding crime prevention, police attendance and use of police time. The report had highlighted that Warwickshire Police attended 39 per cent of crimes which had been lower than the estimated national average of 79 per cent. The Commissioner advised that the decision to deploy officers to crime scenes was made following an effective assessment, taking into account threat, risk and harm, together with a view on the vulnerability of the crime and of the victim. The Commissioner believed that this strategy was an effective use of police time and could be attributed to Warwickshire's continued decrease in crime, particularly in the number of domestic burglaries. He added that the superficial data in the HMIC report had attracted media attention, without consideration of the wider facts.

The Chair referred to the potential impact of the report on public confidence in the police and queried whether this might affect an individual's decision to report minor crimes. In response, the Commissioner explained that the assessment of each crime report was undertaken on a two-stage process. In

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the first instance, the crime would be assessed by the police call centre to determine whether a police presence was required. The second stage would involve police attendance when considered necessary and if there was the chance of apprehending the offender. He referred to the recent HMIC report, 'Responding to Austerity' which had identified that Warwickshire Police "is successfully prioritising front line crime fighting roles as its makes the cuts required" and stressed that the outcomes indicated that the deployment strategy adopted by Warwickshire Police was effective.

A question was raised regarding the assessment undertaken by the call centre and what assurances the Commissioner had that this was thorough and accurate. The Commissioner responded that the call centre was operated by high quality staff and the outcomes in Warwickshire, such as the continuing decrease in crime rates, was evidence that the approach was appropriate.

Councillor Gillian Roache commented that an individual would feel that any crime committed against them was serious and that they were entitled to police contact and attendance. She asked that whether following a successful recruitment campaign to increase the number of Police Officers, there would be increased presence. In response, the Commissioner explained that under the current arrangement, a PSCO would undertake a follow-up visit or attend a crime scene; however, this was not counted in the figures as a Police Officer attendance. He added that the number of crimes incidents that could be attended by Officers could increase following recruitment; however, the policy of priority deployment to the most serious crimes, or where there was a chance of apprehending the offender, would continue.

A question was asked regarding the method of prioritisation and how a number of low level crimes which were frequent over a period of time would be managed, given the cumulative impact that these can have on victims. The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner explained that the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2014 had introduced a number of measures, such as the Community Trigger, which would enable low level crimes to be tackled, focusing on the criminal, rather than the offence. Neil Hewison, Chief Executive, added that all recorded crimes, including anti-social behaviour, were analysed by the Safer Neighbourhood Teams, with follow-up visits to victims, if needed.

In response to a question raised regarding the 0.9 per cent increase in 'Burglary Other' as detailed on the Warwickshire Performance Summary 2014/15, Chief Superintendent Martin McNevin explained that there had been a spate of shed burglaries in North Warwickshire over a six-week period which had caused the increase; however, six offenders had been apprehended and three had been charged and it was anticipated that the level of burglaries in this category would now decrease.

A discussion took place with regard to the report by the Police Foundation which had provided an independent review of the Warwickshire and West Mercia Strategic Alliance. The Commissioner explained that the Police Foundation was an independent body who acted as a 'think tank' and was not

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attached to the Home Office or the Association of Chief Police Officers. The Panel expressed concern that that the report did not record which individuals or organisations had contributed to the evidence gathering and drafting of the report and that the Chair of the Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel had not been invited to present his views.

The Commissioner acknowledged these concerns and agreed that the report did include a number of inadequacies and inaccuracies. He explained that the Police Foundation had been commissioned to provide an independent review of the Strategic Alliance and how effective leadership could be achieved. Despite the report's shortcomings, the Commissioner considered that the exercise had been worthwhile and had highlighted a number of areas that would be addressed. In response to the concerns raised by the Panel, the Commissioner agreed that a report be prepared in response to the report's criticisms of the Alliance, which would clarify which criticisms were inaccurate and which would be addressed. The Deputy PCC added that he had discussed whether the report should be an exempt item with the Democratic Services Team Leader. It had been jointly agreed, for the purpose of openness and transparency, that the report should be considered in public. The Commissioner agreed that a report on his response to the Police Foundation report would be prepared and shared with the Panel, which would outline specific areas of activity that were being progressed as a direct consequence of the report.

The Commissioner continued with an overview of the meetings he had held recently following the publication of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham (1997-2013). He had met with the Leader and Strategic Director of People Group at Warwickshire County Council to discuss procedures the county had adopted to prevent, identify and address Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). The Commissioner stressed that complacency in respect of the risk of CSE was not an option. A Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) specifically for CSE would be established to co-ordinate all of the relevant agencies for information sharing purposes and the identification of risks and incidents. Both the Commissioner and the County Council's Portfolio Holder for Health were committed to launching the MASH at the earliest opportunity. Overall, the Commissioner considered that the approach taken by Warwickshire County Council and Warwickshire Police was robust.

Diane Taulbut commented that a recent report had identified that a number of young females who had been apprehended for minor offences were being exploited by gangs. She suggested that this presented an opportunity to question the girls, when in custody, to identify if CSE was a factor. The Commissioner explained that there were a number of indicators that were used to identify vulnerable young people and those at risk of CSE and that offending was one of those. He added that around 170 young people in Warwickshire had been identified as at risk of CSE and were now in receipt of additional support.

The Chair thanked the Police and Crime Commissioner for the update report.

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The Police and Crime Panel agreed to note the update report and request the following:

- 1) Further detail regarding the volume and outcomes of complaints to Warwickshire Police;
- 2) Clarification on the organisations and individuals who contributed to the Police Foundation report, and the cost of the report (it was noted that the cost of the report was commercially sensitive and would be provided to the Panel confidentially);
- 3) The Police and Crime Commissioner's response to the criticisms included in the Police Foundation report and how these would be addressed;
- 4) A regular six-month update on action taken to address the issues raised in the Police Foundation report; and
- 5) Further detail regarding the sale of the former Police Station on Birmingham Road, Coleshill.

### **6. Community Safety Ambassadors**

The Panel considered the Annual Report in respect of the Community Safety Ambassadors (CSA) scheme, which had been launched in September 2013. Members were informed that 26 independent individuals had been appointed to the 29 positions, with a specific role to attend Community Forums and develop Key Individuals Networks (KINs) to alert the Commissioner to emerging locality-based issues and community concerns. It was reported that since January 2014, the CSAs had formally reported to the Commissioner on a range of priorities nominated by the Community Forums, such as anti-social behaviour, speeding and vehicle crime. As the Commissioner may not have been made aware of these issues, he considered that for the relatively low cost the CSAs offered a valuable source of information.

In response to concerns raised previously the Panel, the Commissioner explained that clarification around the role and achievements of the CSAs, including their names and contact details, would be published in a press release to be issued on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

The Police and Crime Panel agreed to note the report.

### **7. Accountability of the Chief Constable**

The Police and Crime Commissioner provided the Panel with an overview of the methods he used to hold the Chief Constable of Warwickshire Police to account. He reported that he held weekly meetings with the Chief Constable to discuss police performance. This was followed up with a Public Accountability meeting every two months, at which members of the public

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could submit questions to either the Commissioner or the Chief Constable, followed by the Commissioner holding the Chief Constable to account in an open public session. In addition, the Commissioner often requested reports from the Chief Constable in respect of operational activity, such as the report on Operation Devonport which had been provided to the Panel.

While the Panel acknowledged the benefit of the Public Accountability meetings, it expressed concern in respect of the comment included in the Police Foundation report which had purported that “the responsibility to pose challenging questions to the Chief Constable is subjugated to the importance of maintaining good working relationships.” The Panel also requested assurances on how the Commissioner monitored the Chief Constable’s role as an operational manager of police teams. In response, the Commissioner explained that he did not agree with the view of the Police Foundation and that he regularly asked probing and challenging questions. Neil Hewison added that the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner carried out robust analysis of data and information in order to challenge performance in a constructive manner.

The Police and Crime Panel agreed to note the report.

### **8. Operation Devonport**

The Panel received a presentation from Chief Superintendent Martin McNevin in respect of Operation Devonport. He explained that the overall aim of the project was to reduce crime through the apprehension of prolific offenders and thereby increase public confidence in policing. Operation Devonport had been launched in October 2012 following a £6.2 million investment to deliver the additional and enhanced levels required. This had included a Policing Priority Team for high crime areas, an Operation Support Team focusing on highways and border crime, and an Acquisitive Crime Team.

Chief Superintendent Martin McNevin highlighted the key successes of the Operation to date, which included a total 1,526 arrests in addition to arrests outside of the Operation’s area of activity, which had culminated in a year-on-year decrease in crime rates across the county. The Panel was informed that this had been achieved through the management of prolific offenders in order to prevent further offences occurring. A total 80 offenders were currently monitored, in order to break the cycle of crime and offer them support to prevent further crime from being committed. For the highest risk offenders, this involved contact on a daily basis.

With regard to the future of Operation Devonport, it was reported that the crime landscape was now different than it had been in October 2012 and included a need for focus on Child Sexual Exploitation, organised crime and historic cases of sexual offences. A report had been presented to the Commissioner regarding the future strategic objectives, outcomes and resources required should the Operation continue over the next two years. An investment of £4.9 million was required to adequately resource the Operation



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with 57 additional members of staff in order to tackle the new crime landscape.

In response to a question raised regarding the use of the 'Stop and Search' method to identify offenders, Chief Superintendent Martin McNevin explained that this method was used in Warwickshire and that, on average, out of every nine searches, one offender would be caught; therefore this was considered to be an effective method of policing. With regard to the use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR), the Panel was advised that this was crucial to tackling cross-border crime; therefore it was important that adequate resources were deployed to police all major highways and provide a timely response to ANPR alerts.

The Vice-Chair considered that the review report in respect of Operation Devonport had not included an adequate assessment of value for money for the £6.2 million investment and how the Operation had differed from mainstream activity. In response, Chief Superintendent Martin McNevin explained that it was challenge to assess value for money; much of the Operation's successes would occur alongside mainstream activity and therefore it was not always possible to isolate a success to one particular officer or team. However, he considered that the report did provide a solid baseline for managing threats and risks through an effective offender management approach and that this was a fundamental part of the annual reduction of crime in Warwickshire.

The Commissioner concluded the item by explaining that the report would be the basis for his discussion with the Chief Constable about the future of the Operation and that this would include a full analysis of value for money.

The Police and Crime Panel agreed to note the report.

### **9. Community Engagement Strategy and Delivery Plan**

The Police and Crime Commissioner presented the Committee with an overview of the draft Engagement Strategy.

Councillor Davies expressed concern that the approach for hard to reach groups had not been covered in any detail within the action plan. In response, Cheryl Bridges, Policy and Research Officer, explained that further detail would be included once the overall Strategy had been approved. She gave assurances that the Strategy and Action Plan was currently in draft form and that hard to reach groups would remain a priority.

In response to a question raised, the Panel was advised that residents would be empowered through the active work of Neighbourhood Watch groups and provided with support and guidance to prevent crime within their localities.

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Cheryl Bridges stressed that all engagement activity would be meaningful and used to identify outcomes and ultimately improve Warwickshire Police. She explained that fundamental to this was the provision of feedback to the individuals and groups who had contributed their views and participated in engagement activity, so that they felt a valued part of the process.

The Police and Crime Panel agreed to note the report and

**10. Work Programme 2014/15**

The Police and Crime Panel considered the Work Programme 2014/15 and updated Recommendations and Actions document.

Georgina Atkinson, Democratic Services Team Leader, reported that the Victims' Services Task and Finish Group had made positive progress since the last meeting of the Panel and had considered evidence from a wide range of representatives and organisations who support victims of crime. The detailed findings of the review, together with a series of recommendations, would be presented to the Police and Crime Panel for approval on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2014.

With regard to the Planning and Performance Working Group, members were advised that the Terms of Reference had been drafted at its first meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2014. The next meeting of the Working Group had been scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> October 2014, to consider the draft Police and Crime Plan 2013-17 Delivery Plan.

The Police and Crime Panel:

- 1) Agreed the updated Work Programme for 2014/15;
- 2) Noted the update on recommendations and actions previously requested by the Panel;
- 3) Noted the update on the Victims' Services Task and Finish Group;
- 4) Approved the Terms of Reference for the Planning and Performance Working Group; and
- 5) Noted the meeting date and arrangements for 2015/16.

**11. Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

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**12. Date of Next Meeting**

The Police and Crime Panel noted that the date of the next meeting had been scheduled for 21<sup>st</sup> November 2014, commencing 11.00 a.m. at Elizabeth House, Stratford-upon-Avon.

**13. Report Containing Confidential or Exempt Information**

The Police and Crime Panel noted that as there had not been any complaints for its attention since the last meeting, there was nothing to discuss for this item and therefore there was no need to exclude the press and public.

The meeting rose at 1.25 pm

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Chairman