

Minutes of the meeting of the Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel held on 22 November 2018

Present:

Members of the Panel

Councillors:

Mike Brain	Warwickshire County Council
Nicola Davies (Chair)	Warwickshire County Council
Tony Jefferson	Stratford-on-Avon District Council
Barry Longden	Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
Derek Poole (Vice Chair)	Rugby Borough Council
David Reilly	North Warwickshire Borough Council
Adrian Warwick	Warwickshire County Council

Independent Members

Andy Davis
Bob Malloy

Warwickshire Police

Martin Jelly Chief Constable

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)

Sara Ansell	Head of Finance
Neil Hewison	Chief Executive
David Patterson	Performance and Scrutiny Policy Officer
Philip Seccombe	Police and Crime Commissioner
Neil Tipton	Head of Media and Communications

Warwickshire County Council Officers

Tom McColgan	Senior Democratic Services Manager
Jane Pollard	Legal Services Manager

1. General

1) Apologies

1.1 Councillors Chattaway, Dirveiks and Thompson gave their apologies for the meeting.

2) Members' Disclosures of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests

1.2 There were no disclosures of interest.

3) Chair's Announcements

- 1.3 The Chair stated that along with Councillor Poole, Bob Malloy and Andy Davis she had attended the Police and Crime Panels conference at Warwick University on 12 November 2018. While at the conference the Chair and Vice Chair met with their counterparts from the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel to discuss how the panels would approach the termination of the strategic alliance between Warwickshire and West Mercia. The Chair had also met with the Policing HNC/D students at North Warwickshire and Hinckley College and spoke to them about the Police and Crime Panel's role in scrutinising the Police and Crime Commissioner.

4(i) Minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 September 2018

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4(ii) Minutes of the special meeting held on 25 October 2018

Resolved: That the minutes of the special meeting held on 25 October 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2. Public Question Time

- 2.1 There was no public involvement.

3. Warwickshire Chief Constable's Address

- 3.1 The Chief Constable spoke to his presentation (appendix 1). He highlighted the force's vision 'protecting people from harm' and their ambition 'being great at protecting the most vulnerable'. He felt that these messages were embedded at all levels throughout the force and informed the way in which officers approached their work. The Chief Constable stated that he took responsibility for the disappointing PEEL ratings of 'requires improvement' for Legitimacy and Effectiveness and that he was committed to lifting these back up to 'good'. He also advised the Panel that he felt that the Police and Crime Commissioner needed to set the Council Tax Precept at the maximum allowed in order to guard against any the uncertainty caused by the termination of the alliance. The Chief Constable concluded that Warwickshire Police was a proud force with a 160 year tradition of serving Warwickshire and that despite the challenges presented by the current circumstances officers and staff had pulled together to ensure the Force would continue to effectively serve the community.
- 3.2 In response to Councillor Warwick, the Chief Constable stated that he felt that the impact of historical crimes being recorded had plateaued and that crime figures were starting to reflect the true crime levels in the county and were showing a genuine reduction in crime in the current year.

- 3.3 In response to Councillor Poole, the Chief Constable stated that it was not easy to separate reporting of historical crimes to contemporaneous reporting of crimes and Warwickshire had seen similar levels to elsewhere in the country. He stated that it was a positive sign for society that victims now had the confidence to come forward.
- 3.4 In response to Councillor Brain, the Chief Constable stated that detection rates had fallen as the Force had become more rigorous in recording incidents that may have previously not been recorded and which there was little chance of detecting. A reduction in staff numbers had also negatively affected detection rates. The reduction in funding to the Crown Prosecution Service and Courts had also contributed to a fall in positive case outcomes.
- 3.5 In response to Councillor Warwick, the Chief Constable stated that there was a long way to go both nationally and locally in addressing cybercrime. Detectives in Warwickshire were receiving additional specialist training but the resources were not available to provide this training to all officers and staff. The Police and Crime Commissioner added that he provided funding for two cybercrime advisers who worked as part of Warwickshire County Council with residents to raise awareness of cybercrime and how to protect against it.
- 3.6 In response to Councillor Reilly, the Chief Constable stated that he was confident that the local policing model in Warwickshire was working effectively and he had no plans to change how it operated. Safer Neighbourhood Teams were playing a role in the reduction in antisocial behaviour across the county. They were the backbone of the local policing model and in the Chief Constable's opinion were there to stay.
- 3.7 In response to Andy Davis, the Chief Constable stated that the recruitment of new officers agreed in the 2018/19 budget had not been as quick as he would have wished. The delay had been caused by the Force having to build up the infrastructure necessary to recruit a large number of new officers. Civilian Investigators had been employed to help fill the gap in the short run. The Chief Constable stated that the whole of the workforce was now involved in recruitment with existing officers and staff being encouraged to refer people they thought would be good applicants. In the last two weeks there had been around 200 new applications to join the Force. The Chief Constable added that he felt the recruitment drive had also served to maintain good morale in the Force.
- 3.8 In response to Councillor Brain, the Chief Constable stated that while he did not know the exact figures but there had not been a significant number of officers transferring to West Mercia. He stated that officers were more likely to have transferred to West Midlands Police especially firearms officers due to the firearms centre located in the Force.
- 3.9 In response to Councillor Brain, the Chief Constable stated that during his term he had worked with partners across the county to establish a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub which meant that vulnerable individuals could be identified much quicker and support put in place, this was true for both vulnerable young and older people. There had also been an increase in training around identifying vulnerable individuals across the Force.

- 3.10 In response to Councillor Brain, the Chief Constable stated that the Force was addressing drug related crime in the County at all levels from the Safer Neighbourhoods Teams tackling street level offences to the Force being actively engaged in the serious and organised crime space regionally and beyond. The Police and Crime Commissioner added that there had been significant investment in Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras to help with investigations into drug related crime.
- 3.11 Councillor Longden stated that anecdotally the confidence in the police force did not appear to be rising; certainly among residents that had reached out to him. He also stated that fear of crime seemed to be rising in the north of the County where there had been a number of high profile violent crimes.
- 3.12 The Chief Constable responded that there was no measure of fear of crime kept by the police but that this did not mean that it was not a real issue across Warwickshire but especially in the north. In terms of confidence in the Police Force the National Crime Survey placed Warwickshire Police 16th in the county and third in a comparator group of eight similar forces. Of individuals who came into contact with the Police over 80% reported that they were satisfied and when the most vulnerable individuals were surveyed 90% reported that were satisfied.
- 3.13 In response to the Chair, the Chief Constable stated that the trial of having a mental health nurse in the control room to provide expert advice to responding officers had been successful but the funding from partners had not been available to allow it to continue. The Police and Crime Commissioner stated that Warwickshire Police was working with the three Clinical Commissioning Groups in the county to have mental health professionals accompanying Officers on callouts to enable triage and assessments to take place much quicker; improving outcomes for individuals and reducing amount of officer time taken up supervising individuals while they awaited assessment under the mental health act.
- 3.14 In response to Councillor Brain, the Chief Constable stated that the new control centre would be established with a longer term investment in new systems. The Chief Constable stated that while the older systems did cause officers some frustrations when they did not work as intended, there had been the introduction of remote working to improve efficiency.
- 3.15 In response to Councillor Reilly, the Chief Constable stated that since he had been appointed in 2015 it had been his opinion that Warwickshire would maintain a control room in Warwickshire and would not look to move to a single control room based in West Mercia. The Chief Constable thus did not recognise the characterisation of the decision to open Stuart Ross house as being sudden as had been asserted at the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel.
- 3.16 In response to the Chair, the Chief Constable stated that Officers were victim focused and aware of the support available and referred victims to the appropriate services. The Police and Crime Commissioner added that he hoped to announce the provider for the newly commissioned Victims Service in the coming weeks. The Commissioner stated that his office and the Force both understood that the victim came first in criminal justice and he was convinced that the experience of the victim had improved.

3.17 **Resolved:** That the Police and Crime Panel noted the Chief Constable's address

4. Report on the Work of the Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner

Strategic Alliance

- 4.1 The Police and Crime Commissioner introduced the report. He stated that the unilateral decision to end the Strategic Alliance between Warwickshire and West Mercia Police Forces taken by the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner had presented considerable challenges. The Commissioner, however, was determined that Warwickshire Police would maintain a high standard and was convinced that the unfortunate circumstance would give rise to new opportunities for the Force to improve the way it worked. He stated that the three options for Warwickshire Police post alliance were; a standalone force, some shared services with West Mercia, or collaboration with other partners. While planning for the end of the alliance was inevitably going to take up a lot of senior officer's time the Commissioner sought to reassure the Panel that the day to day work of policing the county would not be affected.
- 4.2 In response to Bob Malloy and Councillor Reilly, the Police and Crime Commissioner stated that he was certainly considering partnering with other public sector bodies or looking to the private sector to provide what were known as 'enabling services' such as HR and finance. The Commissioner stated that he had not ruled any options out going forward and that his office had been approached by a range of organisations included other Forces who wished to investigate potential future collaboration.
- 4.3 In response to the Chair, the Police and Crime Commissioner stated that he still felt that 12 months was not sufficient time for such a large alliance to be effectively split but West Mercia had indicated that they were not inclined to extend the transition period. The Commissioner stated that an exit strategy was expected to be prepared by mid-December and he then hoped to have a road map for the direction of Warwickshire Police post-alliance by the end of the current financial year.
- 4.4 In response to Andy Davis, the Police and Crime Commissioner agreed that it would be very challenging to consider all possible options within the 12 month time frame that has been set. The Commissioner emphasised that leaving the alliance gave Warwickshire Police an opportunity to reflect on how it operated and way that the force could work better in the future.
- 4.5 In response to Councillor Warwick, the Police and Crime Commissioner stated that he was taking legal advice on the interpretation of the clause in the alliance agreement which stipulated that the party terminating the alliance would cover the costs to ensure that any cost that were payable to Warwickshire were payed.

2019-2020 Budget

- 4.6 The Chair invited the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Head of Media and Communications, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to give a verbal update on the precept consultation as part of the Commissioner's report rather than as a stand-alone item.
- 4.7 The Police and Crime Commissioner stated that the end of the alliance on 9nd October 2019 meant that the way the Force operated would fundamentally change halfway through the coming financial year and the manner of operation and thus the costs of the Force from 9 October 2019 was not yet known. Consequently the Commissioner would have to set his budget for 2019-20 based on assumed costs for the Force outside of the alliance. All assumptions used to set the budget would be laid out at the Panel's precept meeting in February.
- 4.8 The Head of Media and Communications stated that beyond the challenge caused by the termination of the alliance the Government had also not yet made any announcements on the Police Funding Settlement for 2019-20. This left the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to try and formulate a sensible consultation without knowing the basis on which the Commissioner could set the Council Tax Precept. Further uncertainty had been caused by the Home Office's review of police pensions funding which would potentially place an increased cost on the Police. The Head of Media and Communications stated that he hoped there would be some clarity around police funding by early December with the consultation starting by mid-December. The forced delay in going out to consultation would mean that the consultation would have to rely more heavily on social media to generate responses than would have otherwise been the case if the Officer of the Police and Crime Commissioner had been able to prepare the consultation earlier and print more leaflets or letters.
- 4.9 Andy Davis stated that he had been working with the Head of Media and Communications to design an improved consultation for 2019-20. Andy Davis welcomed the ambition of the Police and Crime Commissioner to go out to consultation earlier than in previous years with a full consultation and regretted that circumstances had prevented this.
- 4.10 In response to the Chair, the Police and Crime Commissioner assured the Panel that the consultation was important and would influence the 2019-20 budget. The Commissioner also stated that he would look to the Panel to help promote the consultation and drive response rates.

Athena

- 4.11 The Police and Crime Commissioner stated that his office had prepared a report on Athena which the Force had responded to and had produced an action plan to address issues identified. The Commissioner stated that he felt Athena was going to be the long term solution for the Force's IT platform and that user confidence was improving but officers and staff who did not use the system very often were still struggling.

Other Activities

- 4.12 The Police and Crime Commissioner gave an overview of the other activities detailed in the report including working with partner organisation including the County Council to implement the Victim and Witnesses Charter and working regionally to implement a new qualification that would be open to staff to help them progress in the force.

Resolved: That the Police and Crime Panel noted the report

5. Precept Consultation

- 5.1 The verbal update on the precept consultation was considered with Item 4.

6. Victims and Witnesses Charter

- 6.1 The Chief Executive, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner introduced the report which covered the impact of the Victims and Witnesses charter which was now well established in the Force. The Charter was central to the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan and was reflected in how the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner approached its work. An operational group had been established through the Local Criminal Justice Group which examined any negative feedback from victims. The Chief Executive stressed that there was still a lot of progress to be made but the Police and Crime Commissioner was determined to continue pushing the charter forwards. The Police and Crime Commissioner was in the process of commissioning a new Victims Service which looked to create a coherent approach to victim management across Warwickshire.
- 6.2 Councillor Reilly noted figures in the performance report showed a 6% fall in victim confidence which seemed to run contrary to the good work outlined in the Victims and Witnesses Charter update.
- 6.3 The Police and Crime Commissioner responded that addressing victim confidence in the police was a priority for his office and the Force. He stated that he also felt that possibly due to the work done to empower victims they were now more willing to speak out when they had an issue. The Chief Executive stated that he agreed with Councillor Reilly that the figures seemed to represent a deteriorating situation. He felt that a fundamental weakness was follow up which had been an issue for a number of years and was not a new problem. The Chief Executive stated that the figures may be somewhat distorted by the manner in which feedback was collected as no account was made for instances where interactions had not required any follow up. In instances where no follow up had been required individuals were had still been asked their opinion about the quality of follow up and as there had been none this was recorded as a negative outcome. The Performance and Scrutiny Policy Officer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner added that work was being done to improve the quality of data. Higher quality data would lead to a better understanding of why individuals were not satisfied.
- 6.4 Councillor Reilly welcomed the Commissioner's commitment to challenge the Force on the declining satisfaction as Warwickshire residents were being asked to pay more towards the police through the precept at the same time as their satisfaction with the service provided was falling.

- 6.5 The Police and Crime Commissioner responded that he felt that local policing was the key to creating neighbourhoods which felt safer and that the revenue generated by the increase in the precept in 2018-19 had been spent on local policing. He stated that fear of crime was exacerbated by a reduction in visible policing presence and had contributed to the decline in satisfaction. The Chief Executive stated that the Force still had an 80% satisfaction rate which was a high level of satisfaction when compared with other forces.
- 6.6 Bob Malloy stated that one of the most distressing things for a victim was when a case was dropped by the prosecution service or a defendant was found not guilty despite a large amount of evidence. He stated that pressure on the Crown Prosecution Service and HM Courts and Tribunal Service had created resulted in situations where the prosecution had not be able to prepare their case but the courts were unwilling to adjourn a case as this represented a cost to them. The result was damaging to the confidence of both victims and witnesses.
- 6.7 The Chief Executive responded that he was acutely aware of the pressures on the different services and the issues were examined when they arose. The Police and Crime Commissioner however did not have any legal power over the courts or prosecution service and was not able to directly influence them. The Police and Crime Commissioner did have a role in bringing the different services across the county together to promote more integrated working.
- 6.8 Councillor Longden stated that he was concerned that witnesses were not being given as much attention as victims. He stated that earlier in the year several individuals in Nuneaton and Bedworth that reported crimes had then refused to participate as a witness out of fear of retribution.
- 6.9 The Police and Crime Commissioner stated that he was aware that there were those that did not wish to come forward and give evidence. The Charter was about bringing together agencies in the criminal justice system to create a better and more coherent approach to help encourage witnesses to participate in prosecutions. The Commissioner hoped that giving witnesses the ability to provide testimony via video link would help to encourage witnesses to take part in prosecutions. He also stated that he was aware that it was an area that the Ministry of Justice was also investigating.
- 6.10 The Chair suggested that the Planning and Performance Working Group may wish to take a more in depth look at Victim Satisfaction at a future meeting.
- 6.11 **Resolved:** That the Police and Crime Panel noted the report

7(i). Report of the Planning and Performance Working Group

- 7.1 Bob Malloy, chair of the Planning and Performance Working Group updated the Panel on the group's last meeting. He stated that the group recognised the challenge and scrutiny of Athena's implementation from the Police and Crime Commissioner and in turn the Chief Constable's work to address the issues which had been highlighted. While the Group welcomed the work which was being done to address the two areas rated 'requires improvement' at the last inspection there was concern about the impact of the breakdown of the alliance on efficiency which had been rated 'good' at the last inspection.
- 7.2 The Group also received assurances that it was business as usual for front line policing which had been echoed today. It was important for the Panel to keep the additional pressure which had been placed on the Force and on the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner by the termination of the alliance when asking them to report to the Panel or the working groups.
- 7.3 **Resolved:** That the Panel noted the draft minutes of the Planning and Performance Working Group meeting held on 5 November 2018.

7(ii). Update from the Budget Working Group

- 7.4 Councillor Warwick provided a verbal update of the group's last meeting on 21 November 2018. The key issues the Budget Working Group had considered were police pensions, the strategic alliance and the settlement from government all of which had been discussed by the Panel earlier in the meeting. Councillor Warwick stated that the position at the end of the year was expected to be that £2.1 million less had been drawn down from reserves resulting largely from lower staffing costs due to the delay in recruiting officers.
- 7.5 **Resolved:** That the Panel noted the verbal update.

The minutes of the meeting on 21 November 2018 are included as Appendix 2

8. Work Programme 2018-19

- 8.1 **Resolved:** The Work Programme was noted as tabled.

9. Dates of Meetings 2018-19

The Chair invited the Panel to take note of the future meeting dates:

Friday 4 February 2019 (Precept meeting)
Thursday 14 March 2019

Reports Containing Confidential or Exempt Information

The Chair moved that, in light of the remaining items on the agenda, that members of the public be excluded from the meeting for item 12 on the grounds that their presence would involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Section 12(a) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Resolved

That the Police and Crime Panel meeting moves into private session.

10. Urgent Items

- 10.1 The Panel considered an urgent item to receive an update on the progress of the alliance negotiations from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

11. Complaints

- 11.1 The Panel was provided with an update.

The meeting rose at 1:40pm

.....
Chair