

Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel

Thursday 23 September 2021

Minutes

Attendance

Committee Members

Councillor David Reilly
Councillor Derek Poole
Councillor Jenny Fradgley
Councillor Clare Golby
Councillor John Holland
Councillor Dave Humphreys
Councillor Christopher Kettle
Councillor Bhagwant Singh Pandher
Andrew Davies

Officers

Caroline Gutteridge, Team Lead Senior Solicitor Planning & Litigation
Deborah Moseley, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Virginia Rennie, Strategy and Commissioning Manager (Strategic Finance)

Others Present

Dave Patterson, Development and Policy Lead, Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner
Polly Reed, Chief Executive, Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner
Philip Seccombe, Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner
Neil Tipton, Head of Media and Communications, Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner

1. General

(1) Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Barbara Brown and Ian Davison and Mr Andy Davis.

(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None.

(3) Minutes of the previous meetings

The Police and Crime Commissioner requested an amendment to the minutes in respect of the second paragraph on page 12 of the agenda pack, to clarify that the bulk of new officers were funded by the council taxpayer. Upon the Chair's request for clarification that 40% of

the force had less than three years' service, the Commissioner advised that this was 40% of response officers.

Subject to the amendments above, the minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

There were no matters arising.

(4) Public Speaking

None.

2. Report of the Police and Crime Commissioner

The Police and Crime Commissioner presented this comprehensive report, particularly drawing attention to the outline objectives for his new Police and Crime Plan and the Annual Report for 2020-21.

Referring to paragraph 2.1 of the report, relating to Part 2 of the Home Office's review of the role of PCCs, the Chair expressed the Panel's interest in receiving a briefing on any changes to the relationship between the PCC and Chief Constable. The Commissioner noted that the intentions were to strengthen trusted relationships rather than alter duties. He noted that he had completed his response to the consultation and agreed to share his comments with the Panel.

The Chair noted the Panel's responsibilities with regard to review of the Police and Crime Plan, outlined at paragraph 2.2 of the report, and asked if the Commissioner had a timetable for publication. The Commissioner noted that work on the draft was ongoing and would encompass residents' comments and his manifesto commitments. The draft was subject to consultation with various parties, including the Panel and it was his intention to bring the final draft to the November meeting. The Commissioner noted that the format was high level strategic rather than a detailed action plan, and work would be undertaken separately to develop specifics around delivery. He provided clarification around the illustrative diagram of the development of the Plan, in that the Commissioner owned and produced the Plan, not the Chief Constable or Police and Crime Panel.

In terms of the content of the Plan, the Panel made a number of observations and recommendations as follows:-

- Noting the objective to deliver visible & effective policing, Councillor Christopher Kettle asked whether there would be a focus to ensure SNT Teams were fully resourced on a long term basis. The Commissioner advised that local policing had been enhanced and noted the belief of the previous and current Chief Constable that the SNT were the backbone of local policing and there was no intention to downgrade, reduce or change the nature of SNTs in Warwickshire. He went on to accept that it would be preferable if Officers had a longer tenure in SNTs but Officers were more likely than PCSOs to go on to further training and other posts, resulting in some churn. He commented that there were a great number of non-uniformed Police Officers driving unmarked cars and there was therefore a significant number of Officers who were not visible as such to Warwickshire residents.
- The text boxes for objectives two and four were missing some text in the version of the draft presented to Members and some clarity on key terms was requested. The Commissioner

explained that “effective policing” referred to policing to the high standard residents expect and effective enforcement of the law, engaging and reducing crime and reoffending; “innovative” referred to new ways and better ways of doing things and “fighting crime” referred to the disruption of serious crime gangs (eg sheep slaughtering incidents which were believed to have been carried out by them). The missing text was due to the vagaries of Microsoft Word during reformatting of the document.

In response to a question from Councillor John Holland seeking data for the Warwickshire Police establishment for police officers since 2012 in graphical form, the Commissioner agreed to seek this information from the Force in readiness for his next report to the Panel.

Turning to crime rates at paragraph 3.2 of the report, Councillor Holland asked for details of speeding offences. The Commissioner indicated that although speeding was not regularly raised with him as a top priority by residents, he would endeavour to provide some data on this topic; David Patterson was able to advise that the latest data from the Force suggested that there were nearly 20,000 speeding offences in the period April to the end of the July 2021.

Also in relation to crime rates, Councillor Clare Golby sought clarification of the period being reported and was advised that it was a single week (week 36) but that the Commissioner also received monthly, biannual and annual data. The key issue with the reporting of crime statistics was the way that the pandemic had influenced crime and, therefore, the baseline excluded the previous year to provide a more accurate comparison. Councillor Golby was concerned about the levels of rape and incidents of violence with injury and Councillor Jenny Fradgley expressed concern regarding the levels of possession of offensive weapon. The Commissioner explained that the rape statistics may not refer to different individuals and could be historical rapes, or a number of rapes against a single person; in the figures presented it was not possible to extrapolate historical crimes from current ones. He commented on the considerable support available to victims and his discussions with the force, courts and Crown Prosecution Service to improve conviction rates and reduce the time cases took to get to court.

With regard to the possession of offensive weapons, the Commissioner agreed to endeavour to ascertain if there was any further breakdown of the figures in terms of age or other circumstances. It was clarified by the Commissioner that the figures for possession of offensive weapons in week 36 were actually 16 cases, representing a 100% increase from the previous week, and not 100 cases as had been stated in the question posed.

In response to a question from Councillor Christopher Kettle about the categories of crime not included in the reported crime statistics, David Patterson indicated that these would include crimes such as shoplifting, bicycle theft, etc. He noted that the report sought to provide information on the most serious and iconic crimes and requested that the Planning and Performance Working Group provide a steer on the statistical data required by the Panel. In response, the Chair noted that the lines of questioning were to inform the Panel’s understanding and highlight the Panel’s key concerns to the Commissioner.

The Panel Members turned their attention to the Commissioner’s Annual Report (at appendix A) and made the following comments:

- The Chair expressed the Panel’s hope that the report would be used as a foundation for the needs assessment that he understood was being undertaken and which the Panel looked forward to receiving in due course.

- The Panel noted that there was no performance framework or delivery plan mentioned in the report and a robust discussion took place in terms of the Panel's desire to see the report include some information about performance in the context of delivery. The Panel considered that without a performance framework, there was less clarity in terms of efficiency and effectiveness and as a result they were keen to understand what key performance indicators the Commissioner was using. The Panel suggested that it would be helpful to see the Commissioner's framework, however, the Commissioner was keen to understand the indicators that the Panel would like to see assessed. Polly Reed, the Chief Executive at the OPCC, expressed the view that this linked to the development of the current Police and Crime Plan and the OPCC's exploration of how they could demonstrate their successes and it would be timely to receive the input of the Panel. The Chair indicated that he would write to the Commissioner on behalf of the Panel in respect of this point.
- Councillor Golby expressed the view that the achievements of Inspector Barnsley with regard to mental health warranted a separate section. She expressed her thanks to him for his initiative and commitment to this area of service provision.

Councillor Christopher Kettle thanked the Commissioner for the commentary on Serious and Organised Crime set out at appendix B to the Commissioner's report and it was agreed that this report would be referred to the Planning and Performance Working Group to consider the context of the report and the importance of challenge on county lines.

The Panel made no observations with regard to the Performance and Scrutiny Report at appendix C to the Commissioner's report.

3. Police and Crime Panel Annual Report 2020-21

It was agreed that consideration of the Annual Report should be deferred until the next meeting to allow for inclusion of comments relating to performance measures for the Commissioner.

4. Update from the Working Groups

The activities of the Working Groups were outlined in the report attached to the agenda. In the absence of Mr Andy Davis, who chaired the Planning and Performance Working Group, Deborah Moseley, Senior Democratic Services Officer outlined the work of the Group and the recommendations for the work programme that were detailed in the report.

Councillor Christopher Kettle outlined the monitoring undertaken by the Budget Working Group and commended Sara Ansell, Treasurer at the OPCC, for her recent illuminating and helpful report. The report had precisely encapsulated key financial issues with a helpful commentary. He extended his thanks for the quality of this recent report.

The Panel accepted the recommendations for the work programme.

5. Work Programme

The work programme was noted.

6. Dates of Meetings

It was noted that, due to a clashing national event, the Commissioner had requested a change to the date of the next meeting in November and an agreed new date would be circulated in due course.

The remaining future meeting dates were noted.

7. Any Urgent Items

None.

8. Reports Containing Confidential or Exempt Information

Resolved: That members of the public be excluded from the meeting for the items mentioned below on the grounds that their presence would involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1972.

9. Exempt Minutes

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2021 were confirmed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

Arising from the minutes, the Commissioner was invited to provide a general update in terms of the Evolve programme.

10. Complaints

None.

The meeting rose at 3.45pm

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Chair