

Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel

Friday 11 October 2013

PRESENT:

Councillor Croad, in the Chair.

Councillor Rule, Vice-Chair.

Councillors Batters, Boyd, Clemens (substitute for Councillor Barker), Deed (substitute for Councillor Hare-Scott), Duncan, Excell, Haywood, James, Penberthy, Saltern, Williams and Wright (substitute for Councillor Diviani).

Independent Representative: Yvonne Atkinson.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Barker, Geoff Brown, Diviani, Dyer, Hare-Scott, Sanders and Sutton and Mike Firbank (Independent Member).

Also in attendance: Sarah Hopkins, Community Safety Partnership Manager, Lynn Clark, Police and Crime Panel Coordinator, Katey Johns, Democratic Support Officer, Shaun Sawyer, Chief Constable, and Inspector Richard Pryce, Devon and Cornwall Police, Tony Hogg, Police and Crime Commissioner, Sue Howl, OPCC Chief Executive, Karen Vincent, OPCC Performance Manager, Fiona Flemming, Strategic Commissioning Manager, Plymouth City Council, Nicola Channon, Safer Devon Partnership Manager, Devon County Council, Mark Richardson, Chief Executive, Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum and Steve Woollett, Chief Executive, South West Forum.

The meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 2.23 pm.

Note: At a future meeting, the Panel will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

12. MINUTES

Agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2013, subject to an amendment to Minute 4, resolution (4), in respect of the Scrutiny Work Programme, to include consideration of the Police and Crime Commissioner's expenses and allowances.

13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were made in respect of items under consideration at the meeting –

Name	Minute No.	Reason	Interest
Councillor Croad	17 – PCC's Commissioning Intentions Plan 2014/15 to 2016/17	Chair of Safer Devon Partnership	Personal

Name	Minute No.	Reason	Interest
Councillor Penberthy	17 – PCC's Commissioning Intentions Plan 2014/15 to 2016/17	Chair of Safer Plymouth Partnership	Personal
Councillor Excell	17 – PCC's Commissioning Intentions Plan 2014/15 to 2016/17	Member of Torbay's Safer Communities Partnership	Personal
Yvonne Atkinson	17 – PCC's Commissioning Intentions Plan 2014/15 to 2016/17	Trustee of Devon Rape Crisis Service	Personal
Councillor Creed	15 – Traffic Incident Road Closures and 101 Service – Update from Shaun Sawyer, Chief Constable	Local Authority Governor appointed to South West Ambulance Services Trust	Personal

14. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no questions from members of the public.

15. **TRAFFIC INCIDENT ROAD CLOSURES AND 101 SERVICE - UPDATE FROM SHAUN SAWYER, CHIEF CONSTABLE**

In response to concerns raised by Members at the previous meeting, the Panel welcomed Chief Constable Sawyer and Inspector Richard Pryce, who were in attendance to discuss road closures following traffic incidents and the new 101 non-emergency telephone service.

With regard to road traffic accident (RTA) closures, Members received a presentation which –

- put Devon and Cornwall Police's Road Closure Policy for Collision Investigation into context, including that –
 - Devon and Cornwall Police was the largest geographic force in England;
 - the majority of the force boundary was coastal and there were only three strategic routes covering the region, namely M5, A38 and A30;
- provided information relating to the number of people either killed or seriously injured on Devon and Cornwall's roads over the last five years;
- explained why due diligence was required by the Police during their investigation of RTAs and that they had a duty under the Human Rights Act to ensure as much evidence was secured as possible from the scene;
- gave examples of incidents which had taken place, including press coverage;

- acknowledged the financial impact not just to the region's economy but nationally as a result of road closures;
- detailed what was being done to minimise the impact of future incidents, such as investment in technology and movement of staff into specialist traffic units;
- highlighted that a Ministerial Conference on road closures would be taking place on 16 October 2013.

In response to questions raised, Panel members were informed that –

- (a) when incidents occurred on multi-lane highways, the Police did try to keep as many lanes open as possible;
- (b) road closures were necessary to ensure that the Police complied with the law under the Human Rights Act which required, “when someone is denied their right to life, the relevant authorities to carry out an efficient and effective investigation into that person's loss of life”. As each RTA was a potential homicide scene it required a high quality criminal investigation in order that the coroner had as much information and evidence as possible in order to assist, should there be an inquest, in determining cause of death and provide answers for the loved ones of the deceased;
- (c) the Fire and Ambulance Services were both extremely well equipped and experienced in dealing with RTAs and the police worked very closely and quickly with its partner emergency services to get roads re-opened as soon as possible. The Ministerial Conference taking place on 16 October would be looking at emergency services working relations as part of its debate;
- (d) the Highways Agency did have predetermined diversion routes should incidents occur and those diversion plans would be put into place once the Police were on scene. When the Police did arrive their priority would be maintaining the integrity of the evidence.

With regard to the 101 non-emergency service number, the Panel was advised that –

- the 101 non-emergency number had been introduced in order to ease pressure on 999;
- it cost 15 pence to call, 91 per cent of calls were answered promptly, with 53 per cent being dealt with at the first point of enquiry resulting in a customer satisfaction rate of 84 per cent;
- a number of calls were coming in that should be using the 999 emergency service;
- call handlers were highly skilled and were able to signpost callers to other service providers / partner agencies where appropriate;
- the service was still relatively new and it was acknowledged that there were areas for improvement. In order to improve customer satisfaction a range of measures were being introduced such as –
 - new telephony software;

- recruitment of a dedicated performance manager;
- greater staff training, particularly around disability and dementia awareness;
- discussions with Local Authorities regarding joint call handling;
- better communication / publicity around which service callers should be using.

In response to questions raised, panel members heard further that –

- (e) a follow-up appointments system was still to be introduced and it was recognised that this had been causing frustration for people who had already been through the system to report an incident;
- (f) call handlers were well trained in signposting callers to relevant services such as flytipping and graffiti issues being referred to the appropriate Local Authority;
- (g) all calls were issued with a log number, referred to the nearest available unit and dealt with in order of priority;
- (h) one of the wider public interest issues was ensuring that there was follow-up with the person who has reported an incident as this was one of the Police's initiatives around building public confidence;
- (i) IT infrastructure remained a weakness and whilst this was the case there was a reluctance to engage in the use of social media forums.

The Chair welcomed the update, particularly the possibility of joint collaboration on a super call centre, and thanked the Chief Constable and Inspector Pryce for their attendance.

(Councillor Creed declared a personal interest in respect of the above item).

16. **REPORT FROM THE OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER IN RESPECT OF ANY NON-CRIMINAL COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

The OPCC Chief Executive reported that during the period 25 June to 25 September 2013 one complaint had been received which had not been upheld.

Some discussion took place on whether a copy of responses made to individual complaints should be circulated to the panel. The Chair reminded members that both he and the Vice-Chair were able to visit the OPCC and dip sample any of the complaints received and suggested that perhaps it was time they both did that in view of the discussion that had taken place.

Agreed that –

- (I) the OPCC's Chief Executive's decision in relation to Complaint 2 is approved;

(2) the update is noted.

17. **SCRUTINY OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS
COMMISSIONING INTENTIONS PLAN 2014/15 TO 2016/17**

In accordance with its agreed work programme, the panel scrutinised the Police and Crime Commissioner's commissioning decisions and his future commissioning intentions. Members heard –

- from the Panel's Co-ordinator, who outlined the process to be followed for this item of pro-active scrutiny;
- from the OPCC's Chief Executive and Performance Manager who, by way of a presentation –
 - explained the context for the Police and Crime Commissioner's commissioning;
 - set out key principles for Devon and Cornwall;
 - clarified current and proposed grant allocations;
 - outlined the next steps to be taken;
- that the Police and Commissioner had communicated his commissioning intentions to various external partner agencies, including –
 - the Chairs and Managers of the Community Safety Partnerships and Drug and Alcohol Teams;
 - DV Partnerships;
 - Youth Offending Team Management Board and Managers;
 - the Chief Constable;
 - the Leaders of the relevant Local Authorities;
- from a number of witnesses who set out their thoughts and concerns on the Commissioning Intentions Plan, including –
 - Fiona Flemming, Strategic Commissioning Manager, Plymouth City Council;
 - Nicola Channon, Safer Devon Partnership Manager, Devon County Council;
 - Mark Richardson, Chief Executive, Cornwall Voluntary Sector;
 - Steve Woollett, Chief Executive, South West Forum.

Having taken the opportunity to question the Police and Crime Commissioner and the witnesses, panel members suggested that it would be helpful to have sight of the funding allocation matrix in order to help them understand the demographics in relation to incidents of crime and how this related to the amount allocated to each of the region's Community Safety Partnerships.

The Chair thanked the Police and Crime Commissioner and his team for their presentation and, in particular, the witnesses for taking the time to attend and add value to the scrutiny process.

Agreed that, having heard from the Police and Crime Commissioner and witnesses, the Police and Crime Panel take the opportunity to comment on and make recommendations to the Police and Crime Commissioner in respect of his future commissioning framework and rationale and ensure this aligns with the priorities

identified in local and Peninsula Strategic Assessments as well as the Police and Crime Plan.

Note: A detailed report setting out the findings of this review would be produced and circulated to panel members for their comment prior to submission of any recommendations to the Police and Crime Commissioner who would then have one month to respond. A copy of that report, together with the PCC's response will be published on the Police and Crime Panel's website in due course.

(Councillors Croad, Excell and Penberthy and Yvonne Atkinson declared personal interests in respect of the above item).

18. **POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S REPORT ON ACTIVITIES AND DECISIONS**

The panel heard from the Police and Crime Commissioner regarding activities undertaken and decisions made to date, as well as details of forthcoming planned events. As a supplement to information not contained within the report, the Commissioner highlighted the following salient points –

- (a) the report was not the end of year report, it was periodic and by no means exhaustive as there were many activities not included which were carried out behind the scenes, including work into the development of Victims' commissioning and Victims' Services;
- (b) excellent work was being undertaken by Local Authorities around alcohol. The recent Alcohol Think Tank event had highlighted lots of issues to consider a number of which would best be dealt with nationally at the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners level, such as how to challenge the supermarkets on their pricing regime, and the professionalising of licensees.

In response to questions raised, the panel was advised that –

- (c) staffing levels within the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner were currently at about the right level with staff operating at capacity, however, his growing role in regard to criminal justice and blue light response services had not yet been taken into account;
- (d) there was a predominance of issues in Devon over Cornwall and therefore the majority of the Police and Crime Commissioner's time was spent in Devon, however, consideration was being given to setting up an office in Cornwall for both him and the Chief Constable to split their time between;
- (e) with regard to investment in back office staff, the Police and Crime Commissioner had been elected by the public to do the job and they should let him get on with it.

The Chair suggested that any future questions on staffing be reserved for the next panel meeting when scrutiny of the Police and Crime Commissioner's staffing arrangements would be taking place.

In preparation for the scrutiny of the Police and Crime Commissioner's staffing arrangements, Councillor Penberthy requested that the panel be provided with a copy of the OPCC's staffing structure, to include staff names and contact details along with some information about their roles. In addition, circulation to the panel of information about the OPCC's advisory groups and what each of them were doing would also be welcomed.

The panel noted the update with thanks.

(This item was moved up the agenda in order to facilitate better meeting management).

19. **REQUEST BY COUNCILLOR RULE TO ATTEND THE COPACC CONFERENCE 'PCCS ADN PANELS: MAKING THE RELATIONSHIP CRITICAL, FRIENDLY AND EFFECTIVE' ON 16 OCTOBER 2013**

Councillor Rule suggested that should anyone have a question or issue they would like her to raise at the conference, they e-mail them to her before the event.

Agreed –

- (1) Councillor Rule's attendance at the Conference on behalf of the panel;
- (2) that reimbursement for travel and overnight accommodation is made from the Home Office allocation to the Host Authority;
- (3) any questions or input required by members to the Conference are e-mailed to Councillor Rule before the event;
- (4) that Councillor Rule will provide feedback on the Conference to the next panel meeting on 20 December 2013.

(This item was moved further down the agenda in order to facilitate better meeting management).

20. **FUTURE MEETING DATES**

The panel noted the dates of future meetings and in particular that of the next meeting on 20 December 2013.