

Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel

Friday 7 February 2014

PRESENT:

Councillor Croad, in the Chair.

Councillor Rule, Vice-Chair.

Councillors Batters, Boyd, Geoff Brown, Eddowes, Excell, Hare-Scott, James, Owen (substitute for Councillor Sutton), Penberthy, Saltern, Williams and Wright.

Independent Representative: Yvonne Atkinson.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Barker, Duncan, Haywood, Sanders and Sutton and Mike Firbank (Independent Representative).

Also in attendance: Sarah Hopkins, Community Safety Partnership Manager, Lynn Clark, Police and Crime Panel Coordinator, Katey Johns, Democratic Support Officer, Tony Hogg, Police and Crime Commissioner, Andrew White, OPCC Interim Chief Executive, Duncan Walton, OPCC Treasurer, and Jan Stanhope, OPCC Senior Advisor.

The meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 2.03 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.

31. **MINUTES**

Agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 20 December 2013.

32. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following declaration of interest was made in respect of items under consideration at the meeting –

Name	Minute No.	Reason	Interest
Councillor Excell	Minute Nos. 34 – 38	Executive Lead for Torbay's Safer Communities Partnership	Personal

33. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

One question was received from a member of the public, Mr Lloyd. Though the question was not in accordance with the "Panel Arrangements and Rules of Procedure", which state that questions posed to the Panel should be relevant to the 'Panel's Functions', it was accepted by the Chair in the interests of openness and

democracy and forwarded on to Mr Tony Hogg, the Police and Crime Commissioner, who responded as set out below.

Question No	Question By	Subject
I 13/14	Mr R Lloyd	Police and Crime Commissioner Achievements
<p>What has the Police and Crime Commissioner personally done, achieved or organised that could not have been done, achieved or organised by an already existing Chief Constable, senior Police Officer or any senior member, civilian or uniformed, of the police service?</p>		
<p>Response:</p> <p>“I always welcome the opportunity to explain more about the pioneering role of Police and Crime Commissioners and the influence and impact we can make as the public’s policing representatives.</p> <p>Before the inaugural PCC election in November 2012, police forces were held to account locally by Police Authorities. They were made up principally of local authority representatives and independent members. However they had no real public facing role.</p> <p>With this in mind the Government replaced Police Authorities with directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners. The aim was simple – to bring police and public much closer together. My manifesto and subsequent Police and Crime Plan includes policing priorities developed by me, but moulded and influenced by what the public tells me. They include protecting officer numbers, tackling alcohol related crime and misuse, domestic and sexual violence and giving a victims of crime a greater voice. I have engaged directly with many groups, partners, police and thousands of individuals over the last two years, before and after receiving the election mandate.</p> <p>With any new system there will inevitably be a ‘bedding in’ period and after more than a year in office, I believe that I am through this. Considerable work needed to be done in my first twelve months to enable an effective transition from the Police Authority and to manage a considerably larger workload and statutory responsibilities, including the commissioning of services for community safety, victims and restorative justice.</p> <p>An excellent example of how I can make a real difference is in maintaining police officer numbers above 3,000. Under the old Police Authority they were due to fall to 2,810. The public told me that they wanted to see ‘bobbies on the beat’ and I was able to raise the policing precept part of the council tax last year to enable me to stop this decline in numbers. Indeed, you will notice that I am recommending a similar rise for this purpose for 2014/15. This can only be done by an elected</p>		

representative.

In a democratic society it is imperative that there is transparent and effective scrutiny of our police force. I hold the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of the police and crime plan and more than ever before there is rigorous analysis of force performance which is carried out by the OPCC. Clearly it would be inappropriate for this work to be carried out internally by the police force themselves and, as PCC, I have the power to appoint and, in exceptional circumstances, dismiss the Chief Constable.

I am pleased with what we have achieved so far, whilst accepting that much new work lies ahead of us. I do accept that some people still have to be convinced about the merits of this PCC role. However I am confident that we are already proving how it effectively delivers what the Government set out to achieve. It provides a link to the public for police performance, scrutiny and transparent accountability and I have received plenty of positive feedback about how refreshing it is to have a genuine pathway for the public to influence the future shape of our policing.

It is inconceivable to see how the statutory responsibilities of Police and Crime Commissioners, and therefore the stated goals of Government policy on this issue could be achieved by senior officers within the force. My role is scrutinised by the Police and Crime Panel, and ultimately my performance will be reflected in the process of democratic accountability.”

Members noted that Mr Lloyd was not in attendance at the meeting and a copy of the response had been sent to him.

34. **CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT REFRESH OF THE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN - 2014-2017**

The Chair welcomed the Police and Crime Commissioner and his team who were in attendance to present the draft refresh of the Police and Crime Plan 2014-2017. Mr Hogg commented that he welcomed scrutiny of his plan, performance and budget today and, in these challenging times, he hoped to be able to present proposals which he believed were affordable, sustainable and able to meet the challenges ahead for policing.

The Panel considered the information regarding the Police and Crime Plan contained within the written report, submitted as part of the agenda pack, and within the presentation slides. Members heard that the Plan –

- remained under development;
- reflected the PCC’s experience of his first year in office;
- had been adjusted to reflect new and emerging risks;
- would clearly set out the PCC’s expectations of the OPCC, Chief Constable and partners;
- contained the PCC’s vision for Devon and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly;

- identified the following six areas of priority –
 - to make our area safer
 - a focus on cutting alcohol-related harm
 - a renewed drive for efficiency and reducing cost
 - a more effective criminal justice system
 - establishing victim support services
 - to enable citizens to play their part in community safety
- set out the PCC's budget for 2014-2018, including the precept proposal for 2014-15 of a 1.99 per cent increase

Following a lengthy debate on this item, it was clear that there were a number of areas of concern which members shared around the content of the Plan. These were that the PCC should consider –

- (a) including within his Plan more prominently as a priority, the issues of rape, domestic violence and abuse, and sexual offences/violence;
- (b) including within his Plan how he was assessing the social value, impact and cost of crime;
- (c) including in his 'vision' the different and diverse communities that made up the population of Devon and Cornwall;
- (d) reinstating within his Plan "hate/mate" crime as a priority;
- (e) how he could strengthen relationships with the Crown Prosecution Service;
- (f) giving more prominence in his Plan to substance misuse (drugs and new psychoactive substances);
- (g) under the priority 'to reduce the crime and harm caused by the misuse of alcohol' to move the statement under 'I expect the Chief Constable to' which stated "Effectively deploy the range of legal measures that were available to them to address alcohol-related crime and disorder problems, such as Fixed Penalty Notices and Dispersal Notices" to sit under 'I will work with Partners';
- (h) developing a framework for demonstrating performance against the Police and Crime Plan for regular scrutiny by the Police and Crime Panel;
- (i) giving more prominence within his Plan reference to PCSOs;
- (j) how he could personally engage more widely with scrutiny arrangements, e.g. Licensing Committees, and councillors in order to express his vision and views and become involved in wider issues, e.g. gambling;
- (k) under 'making every penny count', reviewing and broadening this in light of the 'bigger picture' in relation to estate rationalisation and collaboration;

- (l) improving/refining definitions in respect of alcohol harm and the connection with violence (including domestic violence and abuse) and sexual violence;
- (m) providing the Panel with a copy of the Chief Constable's Delivery Plan when finalised;
- (n) providing his 'Communications Strategy' when drafted, including how he would improve the levels of Police staff who were aware of and understood the PCC's priorities.

Agreed that the Police and Crime Panel will review the Draft Refresh of the Police and Crime Plan 2014-2017, taking account of the comments and observations made today, as noted in the minutes and on the webcast, and will submit a formal response on this item to the Police and Crime Commissioner after the meeting.

(This item was taken in conjunction with minutes 35 and 36).

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

35. **POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Further to minute 34 above, Members heard from the Police and Crime Commissioner in respect of his Performance Report and were advised that –

- he was working with his team to try and simplify the way in which crime and performance measures, both from his office and the Police, were projected;
- another of his Performance and Accountability Boards, designed at improving public access and transparency to discussion and decisions, had taken place this week;
- the target of reducing crime by two per cent would not be achieved, despite there having been an overall reduction of -2.6 per cent compared to the twelve months to 31 December 2012. This was due to a +0.4 per cent increase in the nine months from 1 April to 31 December 2013.

During the discussion on this item, a number of issues were raised by Panel Members and responded to as follows –

- (a) the survey measures relating to leadership performance indicated a high level of disagreement amongst the Police workforce, this was a significant area of challenge and concern to the PCC and was one he was addressing with the Chief Constable;
- (b) a communications strategy was being worked up to ensure that the Police workforce were better informed of the PCC's priorities for Devon and Cornwall;
- (c) a policy decision had been taken by the PCC that cctv funding would no

longer be provided by the Police and any future funding requirements would have to be sought from local authorities;

- (d) morale amongst staff had been assessed as satisfactory and was not at the levels reported and hyped in the press;
- (e) the PCC acknowledged that the format of the report and the level of detail relating to performance could be improved and as, he had previously stated, he and his team were working together to improve it;
- (f) this report reflected the performance of the Police and not that of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Panel noted the report.

(This item was taken in conjunction with minutes 34 and 36).

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

36. **CONSIDERATION OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S PROPOSED LEVEL OF PRECEPT FOR 2014/15**

Further to minutes 34 and 35 above, the Police and Crime Commissioner set out his proposals for the 2014-15 precept as submitted in the reports attached to the agenda and contained within the presentation slides.

The PCC reported that nationally it looked set to rise by five per cent in all but four of the 43 policing areas. However, he believed that his Crime Plan had served Devon and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly well and that it remained a low-cost Force in terms of its level of policing. He was, therefore, proposing a 1.99 per cent increase. This would represent an average council tax contribution of £166.16 for Plymouth based on a Band D property (6.2 pence per week).

The Panel agreed –

- (1) the proposal to increase the precept by 1.99 per cent;
- (2) that the Police and Crime Commissioner keeps the Panel informed of his Estate Strategy and Review developments.

(This item was taken in conjunction with minutes 34 and 35).

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

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

The panel briefly heard from the Police and Crime Commissioner regarding activities undertaken, decisions made to date and details of forthcoming planned events, as detailed in his report. Mr Hogg highlighted the following –

- delivering victim services continued to be a big issue;
- his frustration over further budget reductions of £2.5m in order to fund the expansion of major national policing projects;
- his disappointment that the Government review of the formula used to calculate police force funding would not be completed before the General Election and the fact that current funding arrangement took no account of the influx of tourists to the South West nor recognise the added complications of policing over 500 miles of coastline.

The Panel noted the report.

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

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

The panel noted that no complaints had been received against the Police and Crime Commissioner during the period 25 November 2013 – 22 January 2014.

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

39. **FUTURE MEETING DATES**

The Chair encouraged members to respond to the Democratic Support Officer with their availability on the dates circulated.

In response to Ms Atkinson's query regarding the next topic of scrutiny would be, it was agreed that the two remaining previously agreed topics would be circulated to the panel via e-mail.