

## **Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel**

**Friday 5 October 2018**

### **PRESENT:**

Councillor Croad (Devon County Council), Chair.  
Councillor Batters (Cornwall Council), Vice Chair.  
Councillors Atherfold, Barker (Teignbridge Council), Derrick (Plymouth City Council), Excell (Torbay Council), Hackett (Torridge District Council), Haydon, Mathews (North Devon District Council), Nelhams (Isle of Scilly), Rule (Cornwall Council), Sellis (West Devon), Mrs Squires (Mid Devon District Council), Sutton (Exeter City Council), Towill (Cornwall Council), Wakfer (Independent Member), Wright (East Devon District Council) and Brown (Cornwall Council).

Apologies for absence: Councillor Wingate (South Hams District Council), Councillor Fairman (Cornwall Council), Councillor Sanders (West Devon District Council) and Emily Macaulay (Independent Member Devon).

Also in attendance: Nicky Allen (Chief Executive, OPCC), Fran Hughes (Chief Executive, OPCC), Alison Hernandez (Police and Crime Commissioner), Ross Jago (Lead Officer), James Driscoll (Clerk to the Panel).

The meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 12.30 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.*

#### 63. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 10 August 2018 were approved.

#### 64. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 65. **Public Questions**

There were no questions from members of the public.

#### 66. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business from the chair.

67. **Exploration of Potential Merger**

Alison Hernandez (PCC) presented to the panel the report on the exploration on a potential merger of Devon and Cornwall Police with Dorset Police. The PCC reported that –

- (a) the merger would not be in the best interest of the people of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly;
- (b) the merger did not have enough public support, a pre-requisite laid out by the home office;
- (c) Council Tax harmonisation would mean the people of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly would pay more and not get more in return, whereas Dorset would pay less and get something in return;
- (d) the merger will not reach the initial aspiration of 430 extra officers but 100 extra officers across the three counties.

The following areas were discussed by the panel:-

- (e) that Devon and Cornwall Police are one of the lowest Council Tax payers throughout the country and is it realistic and not unreasonable to pay more for policing;
- (f) that the case for the merger outweighed the case against the merger;
- (g) the accountability of local policing;
- (h) the survey would most likely resulted against the merger had the facts on officer numbers been available;
- (i) Cornwall and Plymouth Councils had shared the view that a merger is not in the best interest of the people;
- (j) that the role of a Police and Crime Commissioners was quite new and there is still some scepticism about the usefulness of the role;
- (k) that the telephone survey did not give the responder enough time to think of a response that actually explained their viewpoint;
- (l) that the merger was certainly possible and had positives and negatives, however the merger was riddled with uncertainty;
- (m) the Mayor of Torbay and the Leaders and Group Leaders in Torbay had expressed that the merger did not demonstrate the benefits and is not value for money;
- (n) there was no clarity received on where the 70 extra officers would be deployed;

- (o) that financially Dorset were in a very weak position there was no options appraisal;
- (p) that the strategic alliance currently was working well;
- (q) the telephone survey figures were very disappointing that lessons need to be learned following this process;
- (r) that the reasons for not supporting the merger are completely flawed and the Devon County Council Cabinet were fully in favour of a merger.

The Panel agreed to support the Police and Crime Commissioner's 'minded to' decision to reject the proposed merger for Devon and Cornwall and Dorset Police Forces.

#### 68. **Road Safety Strategy (including national initiatives/developments)**

Fran Hughes (Chief Executive) presented to the panel the report on the Road Safety Strategy. It was reported that -

- (a) the Joint strategy between the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable was specifically aimed at reducing the numbers of killed and seriously injured on our roads;
- (b) the factors for killed and seriously injured were excessive speeding, not wearing seatbelts, driver distraction and careless and inconsiderate driving;
- (c) there was a range of early intervention and prevention activities in place and there were plans to do more;
- (d) the strategy is part of a much wider set of engagements and activities.

In response to questions from the panel it was commented that –

- (e) figures related to victims not incidents;
- (f) 94% of collisions were related to human error and the Fatal Five are the top five human error issues.

The panel welcomed the report.

#### 69. **Police and Crime Commissioners Update**

Alison Hernandez (PCC) updated the panel on areas of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. It was commented –

- (a) Small Grant Scheme had been a success in funding local community projects;

- (b) PCC and 20 other Police and Crime Commissioners had written to Government to get "Spice" (a manufactured drug substitute) reclassified as a 'Class A' substance;
- (c) a scrutiny board has been set up to scrutinise pathfinder scheme and out of court disposals;

In response to questions from the public it was commented that -

- (d) hubs in Cornwall and Devon into the control rooms at Plymouth and Exeter;
- (e) there was a triage system in place for response to 101 calls, peak demand was presenting challenges.

The Panel noted the report.

70. **Police and Crime Commissioners Performance Report**

The panel noted the report.

71. **Non-Criminal Complaints**

There were no non-criminal complaints.

72. **Work Programme**

Members were informed to contact the clerk with additions to the work programme.