

Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel

Friday 10 August 2018

PRESENT:

Councillor Croad (Devon County Council), Chair
Councillor Batters (Cornwall Council), Vice Chair
Councillors Barker (Teignbridge Council), Derrick (Plymouth City Council), Excell (Torbay Council), Fairman (Cornwall Council), Hackett (Torridge District Council), Mathews (North Devon District Council), Nelhams (Isle of Scilly), Rule (Cornwall Council), Sanders (West Devon District Council), Mrs Squires (Mid Devon District Council), Sutton (Exeter City Council), Towill (Cornwall Council), Wingate (South Hams District Council) and Wright (East Devon District Council).

Substitutes: Councillors Harvey (Exeter City Council) substituting for Councillor Sutton, Penberthy (Plymouth City Council), substituting for Councillor Haydon, Desmonde (Cornwall Council), substituting for Councillor Towill

Apologies for absence: Councillors Atherfold, Macaulay and Wakfer (Independent Member)

Also in attendance: Shaun Sawyer (Chief Constable, Devon and Cornwall Police), Alison Hernandez (Police and Crime Commissioner), Fran Hughes (Chief Executive, OPCC), Sharon Taylor (Assistant Chief Constable, Devon and Cornwall Police), Nicky Allen (Treasurer, OPCC), Andrew Coleman (Director, Local Partnerships), Ross Jago (Lead Officer), James Driscoll (Clerk to the Panel)

The meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 1.15 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.

58. Declarations of Interest

There was no declaration of interest made in accordance with the code of conduct.

59. Chairs Urgent Business

There was no urgent business from the chair.

60. Potential Merger of Dorset and Devon and Cornwall Police

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) gave a report on the Potential Merger of Dorset and Devon and Cornwall Police.

The Commissioner highlighted -

- (a) That the force –
 - had an annual spend of £452m;
 - covered a population in the region of 2.5m;
 - had 14 million visitors per year.
- (b) comparisons with other Police forces -
 - every police force worked with one or more of its neighbours;
 - no other forces had formally considered a merger recently;
 - some were reaching the limits of what could be accomplished within existing structures;
 - this proposed merger had caught the attention of the policing community - numerous forces and Government were watching.

The Chief Constable (Devon and Cornwall Police) commented that -

- (c) operational Policing -
 - role of chief constable in merger business case;
 - local representative and global representative;
 - local threats and global threats;
 - the best of historic British policing;
 - living in the 21st century;
 - seizing one's own destiny.

The Assistant Chief Constable (Devon and Cornwall Police) commented that -

- (d) the creation of a new force -
 - Devon and Cornwall Police currently had an alliance since 2015 with Dorset;
- (e) the merger would progress the relationship with Dorset enabling:
 - an increase to local, national and international demand;
 - a natural pathway of the strategic alliance;
 - an operationally driven, politically supported force.
- (f) the vision of a the merger -
 - legally become one new force;
 - development of a new policing model;
 - limited immediate change for most staff;
 - a practical progression to provide a more resilient service to our communities.
- (g) the national stage will allow the force -
 - keep local forces local;
 - more community policing;
 - a greater voice and more influence of a national scale.
- (h) savings -

- creating a new force cuts a chief constable and a police and crime commissioner;
 - money saved can be reinvested in areas such as improved technology;
 - allow us to invest in new frontline staff.
- (i) staffing -
- savings allow us to increase our staffing numbers;
 - council tax alignment was a legal requirement;
 - aspiration for 430 new officers or staff.
- (j) what a single leadership with a single focus means for the police force -
- single leadership cuts bureaucracy and increased efficiency;
 - effectiveness and productivity;
 - one vision and one plan;
 - strengthened accountability through single points of leadership;
 - reduced administrative burden on the force.

The Chief Executive (OPCC) commented that -

- (k) the role of the PCC -
- responding to the recommendation of both chief constables to explore a merged force;
 - active participation in the governance to explore the merger;
 - scrutiny of the process and support and challenge role as the business case being developed;
 - listening to the views of stakeholders;
 - final decision maker with PCC Dorset in September;
- (l) governance and decision making -
- each one of the Corporation's Sole had a role in governance and decision making:
 - CC Shaun Sawyer – Senior Responsible Officer;
 - PCC Martyn Underhill – Sponsor;
 - PCC Alison Hernandez – Chair of Alliance Convergence Board;
 - CC James Vaughan – Board Member.
 - the decision is made by the Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners and then submitted to the Home Office, if they approve, it will go to the Home Secretary and then finally Parliament.
- (m) governance of Strategic Alliance -
- alliance Executive Board;
 - chaired alternatively by CCs and attended by both PCCs;
 - this is business as usual for Alliance functions.
- (n) governance of Merger Programme -
- alliance Convergence Board (monthly) chaired by PCC Alison Hernandez;

- convergence Steering Group (weekly phone call) all four Corporation's Sole represented;
- working Groups (fortnightly) overseen by Programme Director.

(o) timeline of merger -

March 2018	Sign off outline business case
May 2018	Decision to commence public and stakeholder engagement
June 2018	Stakeholder engagement PCC (Devon & Cornwall) meets with MPs
July 2018	Joint between with MPs from three counties with all four Corporation's Sole
August 2018	Engagement period closes
September 2018	Full business case (FBC) considered by Alliance Convergence Board
October 2018	If FBC agreed then submitted to Home Office by 12 October 2018
December 2018	'Minded to' decision issued by Minister on FBC

The Director for Local Partnerships, the consultant employed by the OPCC, commented that -

The key points the presentation covered were -

(p) final business case -

- does the merger proposal have a clear economic basis (including a clear and viable path for precept equalisation);
- would the merger improve the efficiency of the police;
- would the merger improve the effectiveness of policing in the area;
- would the merger have an impact on public safety;
- does the proposal have sufficient local support?

(q) the areas of the business case -

- strategic case - covering the vision and strategic ambitions for policing across the two force areas and the alignment of that vision and ambition with the structural changes being considered;
- economic case - to demonstrate that the change proposed would optimise public value;
- commercial case - to demonstrate that the preferred option was viable;

- financial case - to demonstrate the affordability of the preferred option emerging from the economic case;
- management case - to demonstrate the achievability of the proposed option.

The Chief Executive (OPCC) commented that -

- (r) public and stakeholder engagement;
 - the Home Office had provided the OPCC advice on who it believed key stakeholders were -
 - staff;
 - trade unions and staff associations;
 - local public;
 - local Members of Parliament;
 - local authorities.
 - with the policing bodies that need engagement as follows -
 - HMICFRS;
 - NPCC;
 - the College of Policing;
 - the Police and Crime Panels.
- (s) the next steps for the merger -
 - public and stakeholder feedback evaluated in September;
 - final business case developed;
 - all four Corporation's Sole decide on whether or not to proceed once FBC was complete;
 - if positive, FBC is submitted to Home Office by 12 October 2018.

In response to questions from members it was commented that –

- (t) both forces had a very rich history and heritage which was part of their local policing family, the locality of policing would not change – the forces name and forces uniform will change at some point but the local policing would not. There had been positive feedback from staff and trade union federation staff. The police forces were aware of any cultural changes required this had been considered via the Strategic Alliance Programme;
- (u) not everyone in the force was in favour of merger;
- (v) the meeting had been arranged to discuss the potential merger with no promise of a business case;
- (w) no consideration had been given to CCTV this stage;
- (x) the two Chief Constables would agree the business case, approach to the merger and would propose it to the PCC, then the PCC would decide if the

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner should propose a merger to the Home Office;

- (y) the panel does not need to support the proposal. The PCC would like to take any feedback from the panel and review it to help the PCC come to the decision on whether to proceed or not;
- (z) the Home Office had been working alongside the two forces in a very supportive way – the merger was a voluntary proposal and would be a decision of the two forces. This initiative was not driven by the Government and focused on the resource and support they can provide;
- (aa) savings would be made by reducing the numbers of two Chief Constables to one, two PCCs to one etc. The immediate cost benefit was to create 100 officers, but there was an aspiration to aim for an additional 330 beyond that making it 430. However, that was a discussion with the Home Office and what they would do to help with any transitional arrangements;
- (bb) Devon and Cornwall Police had been working in a Strategic Alliance since 2013 with Dorset Police. Devon and Cornwall does not share its border with many others Counties. Dorset shares many similarities with Devon and Cornwall Police; it was an urban, rural and coastal area;

Following a short recess the Panel considered a set of recommendations prepared on its behalf and made a number of suggested amendments -

1. Write to Home Secretary and Minister of State for the Police and Fire Service, to express reservations proposed merger of Devon and Cornwall Police with Dorset Police on basis on currently available information;
2. The letter would also –
 - a. Highlight lack of ~~open and transparent~~ information available to the public in relation to the preparation of merger proposals for stakeholders and during the consultation process;
 - b. Highlight ~~the current~~ insufficient financial modelling to justify the proposal or to demonstrate value for money;
 - c. Highlight the lack of information in relation to Council Tax payments and impact on communities across current force area;
 - d. Ask the minister to ensure if the merger is proposed panel is given notice of proposals under Section 33 of the Police Act 1996 and that any resultant statutory instruments should be subject to affirmative procedures when laid before parliament.
3. The Police and Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables are requested to review the arrangements for consultation ~~extending the period~~ and delaying

the proposal until the full business case is provided to the panel. (a motion to strike failed)

Following an undertaking from the Police and Crime Commissioner to provide a detailed information at the next meeting of the panel Cllr Wright made a suggestion to defer. The Chair put the suggestion to members who agreed to move the scheduled 14 September 2018 meeting to October so that the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner would provide the panel with a detailed business case.

61. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business to be discussed on the agenda.

62. **Potential Merger of Dorset and Devon and Cornwall Police (E3)**

This agenda item was discussed in Part I of the meeting.