

Cleveland Police and Crime Panel

A meeting of Cleveland Police and Crime Panel was held on Wednesday, 5th February, 2014.

Present: Cllr Norma Stephenson O.B.E (Chairman), Cllr Charles Rooney (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Chris Abbott, Geoff Baines, Gwen Duncan, Cllr Ian Jeffrey, Cllr Terry Laing, Cllr Steve Nelson and Cllr Bernie Taylor

Officers: David Bond, Peter Mennear, Michael Henderson Mike Batty, Steve Hume, Julie Nixon (SBC)

Also in attendance: Barry Coppinger (Commissioner), Ed Chicken, Michael Porter, Joanne Hodgkinson (Commissioner's Office), Deputy Chief Constable Iain Spittal (Cleveland Police)

Apologies: Cllr Christopher Akers-Belcher, Cllr Carl Richardson, Cllr Hazel Pearson, Cllr George Dunning, Cllr Ken Dixon

PCP 50/13 Evacuation Procedure/Mobile Phones

The Chairman presented the Evacuation Procedures and reminded those present to turn off, or turn to silent, any mobile phone, or similar device, they might have with them.

PCP 51/13 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

PCP 52/13 Minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2013

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2013 were confirmed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

PCP 53/13 Police and Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan 2013 - 2017

Members considered a report relating to the Police and Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan 2013 - 2017.

The report provided details of the proposals and findings following an annual review of the Plan.

It was explained that the Police and Crime Commissioner's objectives and commitments would remain unchanged for the duration of the Plan.

Members were reminded of those objectives

- Retain and develop neighbourhood policing
- Ensure a better deal for victims and witnesses
- Divert people from offending, with focus on rehabilitation and the prevention of reoffending
- develop better coordination, communication and partnership between agencies to make the best use of resources
- working for better industrial and community relations

The Plan's appendices would be updated once the precept had been agreed and an updated version of the full Plan would be circulated to the Panel.

During consideration of the report:

- the Commissioner indicated that he would provide reports on his Estate Strategy.

- discussion took place on tackling sexual violence. Reference was made to a newspaper article that referred to work carried out by HMIC, the recording of crime and a classification of 'no crime' for offences, including rape. The article suggested that the number of recorded 'no crimes' varied significantly between Forces. It was explained that the Cleveland Police followed national standards for crime recording and the HMIC was undertaking a review of the Force's crime recording. The Commissioner indicated that he would monitor this issue and suggested that the HMIC review may provide more details. The Commissioner explained that he would provide the Panel with a report on tackling violence against women and girls and provide further information on the 'no crime' issue that had been raised.

- discussion took place on Community Safety Funding and it was noted that local authorities had been asked to prepare a business case for funding to support community safety initiatives, aimed at addressing objectives in the Police and Crime Plan.

- there was a brief discussion on crime recording and the Commissioner explained the strict controls that existed and the overview he undertook.

RESOLVED that

1. the Panel notes that the objectives and commitments of the Plan would remain the same.

2. the proposed changes to the Plan be noted.

3. Panel members be provided with the updated Plan and appendices when available.

4. that the discussion detailed above be noted and the identified reports be received at a future meeting or meetings.

**PCP
54/13**

Approach to the Budget Strategy - Task and Finish

The Panel considered a report prepared by its Task and Finish Group, that had examined the approach being taken to the 2014 -15 budget, and longer term financial planning.

The Task and Finish Group was established to understand the key issues and financial pressures as part of the budget setting process for 2014-15 and beyond, in order to inform the work of the Panel and PCC. This included both the longer term financial planning process and the impact of the 2014/15 Government grant settlement. This settlement was announced on 18 December during the timescale of the Group's work.

The Group's report set out the findings and recommendations which were intended to assist the Panel by providing assurance on the key issues that had been considered by the PCC.

The Group had found that there was a strategy in place to balance the overall budget for 2014-15 and 2015-16. However, the level of grant reductions had necessitated additional reductions in the numbers of police officers, PCSOs and staff for the Cleveland area, and important details remain unresolved for 2014-15. Under current forecasts, significant further work was needed for 2016-17 and beyond. It was forecast that there would be a budget gap of £11.5m by 2017-18.

The Group recognised the pressure on the 'community safety funding' and the removal of the ring fence. Members recognised the importance of the prevention agenda and the wider benefits of such community safety services, including the impact on the success of the Police and Crime Plan.

Members of the Group had noted that, as of its last meeting (21 January), decisions had not been made on the spending priorities for the majority of the community safety funds for 2014-15. There was therefore very little time to notify organisations and CSPs.

The Group had expressed a wish to examine further the potential use of PCC reserves and had requested that additional information on the reserves, held by the PCC.

As with previous years, the Government announced the 2014-15 (one year) settlement in mid-December and this reduced the amount of time available to plan for all PCCs. This had been exacerbated by the announcement that the 14-15 council tax precept capping limit would not be confirmed until after PCCs were required to notify the Panel of their intentions.

The Group had found that there was a need to review the budget strategy in future years and the Group may have a role in this.

It was suggested that it would be useful for the full Panel to receive a mid-year financial update, potentially based on the quarterly PCC monitoring reports, in order that it had early sight of progress on the achievement of savings plans and any emerging issues.

Members discussed the report and noted:

- that there had been reductions in sickness levels. Members also noted the robust monitoring of TOIL and RDIL and the significant reductions in these areas.

- members noted that, following advice from his Chief Finance Officer the Commissioner felt it prudent to hold reserve levels at 5% of total budget. In more certain financial situations 3% may have been appropriate.

RESOLVED that:

1. it be noted that there was a strategy in place to balance the overall budget for 2014-15 and 2015-16. However, the level of grant reductions had necessitated additional reductions in the numbers of police officers, PCSOs and staff for the Cleveland area, and important details remained unresolved for 2014-15. Under current forecasts, significant further work was needed for 2016-17 and beyond. It was forecast that there would be a budget gap of £11.5m by 2017-18.

2. it be noted that the Group had recognised the pressure on the 'community safety funding' and the removal of the ring fence. The Panel requested that the PCC give full consideration to the importance of the prevention agenda and the wider benefits of such community safety services, including the impact on the success of the Police and Crime Plan, and ensure that partners were fully engaged in discussion before decisions were made.

3. it be noted that decisions had not yet been made on the spending priorities for the majority of the community safety funds for 2014-15. There was therefore very little time to notify organisations and CSPs of any allocations, and the PCC be recommended to conclude this process as soon as possible to give certainty to both partners and current providers.

4. due to the ever increasing need for effective allocation of scarce resources and competing demands, the Panel supported any move to develop objective criteria for the allocation of funding for community safety initiatives in the 2014-15 and future years.

5. the Panel lobby the government to express dissatisfaction with, and highlight the difficulties caused by, the timescale of Government spending announcements. The Panel recommended that the Commissioner considers undertaking a similar approach.

6. the Task and Finish Group continues it's work during 2014-15 due to the ongoing need to review the budget strategy. This would allow Members to consider both the funding pressures but also the achievement of current savings plans and initiatives.

7. the Panel receives a mid-year financial update, potentially based on the quarterly PCC monitoring reports, in order that it has early sight of progress on the achievement of saving plans and any emerging issues.

PCP 55/13 The 2014/15 Precept Proposal

Members were provided with guidance relating to the procedure to be followed when reviewing a proposed precept of the Commissioner, including the timescales for submitting a report to the Commissioner at the conclusion of the review.

Members considered a report and notification from the Commissioner regarding the proposed precept for the financial year 2014/15.

The Commissioner indicated that he had taken into account the following in making his proposal on the precept for 2014/15:-

- the financial impact on the people of Cleveland

- the financial needs of the organisation as currently projected both for 2014/15 and in the future
- the offer of a grant from the Government if he chose to freeze the precept
- the limits proposed by the Government on a precept increase before a referendum would be triggered in Cleveland
- the advice of the Chief Finance Officer in terms of the realistic options that he had.

The Commissioner also indicated that he had taken into account the need for the continued delivery of high levels of Policing and Crime services within the Cleveland area and that having spoken to the Chief Constable and wider partners, he believed a precept increase of 1.997% for 2014/15 best served the needs of the communities of Cleveland. He therefore proposed a precept increase of 1.997% for 2014/15.

Panel members asked various questions about the report and the proposal and the Panel concluded by agreeing that the Commissioner's proposal should be supported.

RESOLVED that the Panel supports the Commissioner's proposed precept of 1.997% for 2014/15.

PCP 56/13 Quarterly Performance Report (October - December 2013)

Members received a report that provided an update of performance scrutiny undertaken by the Police and Crime Commissioner during the period October - December 2013, for 2013 calendar year and for current year to date (April - December 2013).

During consideration of this matter the Commissioner indicated, in response to questions that:

- he did not support the use of water canons and neither did the Chief Constable or Deputy Chief Constable
- he would bring a report on sexual violence and domestic violence to the Panel's next meeting. This would include rape detection and conviction rates and gender details of victims of Domestic Violence.

RESOLVED that the report and discussion be noted and the reports identified be received at the next meeting

PCP 57/13 Programme of Engagement

Members received a report that provided a brief update in relation to meetings attended by the Commissioner, from October 2013 - January 2014. Details of some future engagements were also provided.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

PCP 58/13 Decisions made by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland

The Panel received a report that provided an update in relation to the decisions made by the Police and Crime Commissioner between 8 October 2013 and 15 January 2014. A schedule of some future decisions the Commissioner was likely to make was also provided.

Members considered the report and discussed it with the Commissioner. It was noted that:

- in terms of the building of new headquarters:
 - . option appraisals were being drawn up.
 - . new headquarters would not be a PFI scheme.
 - . discussion around collaboration with emergency services was in progress, at officer level.
- Governance arrangements were very robust. Reference was made to scrutiny by the Audit Panel, External Auditors, HMIC and this Panel
- the Commissioner considered that a central control room of emergency services may provide benefits.
- Ed Chicken, the Commissioner's Chief of Staff, would be leaving his position soon and a replacement was being sought. The Panel would be notified of any appointment in due course, so that a Confirmation Hearing could be arranged.

RESOLVED that the report and discussion be noted.

PCP 59/13 Police and Crime Panel Conference

Members considered a report that provided a summary of issues discussed at the Police and Crime Panel Conference in November 2013.

The Panel agreed that the summary was extremely helpful and had provided a good insight into what other Panels were doing in other parts of the Country.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

PCP 60/13 Forward Plan

The Panel considered its draft Forward Plan.

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be approved.

PCP 61/13 Public Questions

The Panel received a report relating to Public Questions.

Members were reminded of the agreed procedure for considering questions, on notice, and noted that no such questions had been received for this meeting.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

PCP 62/13 Complaint

Members considered a report that provided details of a complaint submitted to the Commissioner's Office concerning his registration with the Information Commissioner's Office in relation to the processing of personal data.

Members noted its options in terms of dealing with the complaint.

RESOLVED that no further action be taken.

**PCP
63/13** **Complaint**

Members considered a report relating to a complaint about the alleged conduct of the Cleveland Police and Crime Commissioner.

Members were reminded of the complaint and the Panel's previous consideration of it. The Panel had agreed to proceed to informal resolution of the complaint

Details of a meeting procedure that the Panel could use to deal with the complaint were provided.

The Complainant was not in attendance at the meeting and had indicated that he would not be attending

RESOLVED that no further action be taken