

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO CLEVELAND  
POLICE & CRIME PANEL**

**30 JULY 2015**

**JOINT REPORT OF HEAD  
OF DEMOCRATIC  
SERVICES, AND HEAD OF  
COMMUNITY  
PROTECTION**

**POLICE & CRIME PANEL SCRUTINY PROGRAMME**

**PURPOSE**

This report provides detail of the work undertaken for the PCP Scrutiny Work Programme 2014/15 and requests topics for scrutiny during 2015/16.

**DETAIL**

On 24 July 2014 the PCP considered six topics for possible scrutiny received from Panel Members and those that arose from the regular discussions between Cllr Stephenson as Chair of the Panel and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC).

The topics were:

- **Shared Services**
- **Overall budget strategy**
- **Victims' Services**
- Police and Community Safety Partnerships
- Community Safety Functions
- **Commissioner priorities**

Following agreement of scrutiny topics selected for review (in bold) for the 2014/15 work programme the Panel appointed members to sub-groups as required for the reviews.

**Overall Budget Strategy**

A Task and Finish Group was established during 2013-14 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.

It was agreed that the Task and Finish Group would resume its work in 2014-15 given the ongoing pressure on police budgets and challenging long term position, and the need to monitor the achievement of the planned 2014/15 savings.

The Group found that:

- the savings plans for 2014-16 were well advanced and set to be achieved overall. This should ensure a balanced budget for that period. Using the information

available, General Fund reserves would be used to balance budget in 2016-17 and further savings needed to be identified to address a gap of £2.6m in 2017-18 rising to £6.5m in 18-19. The overall financial position therefore remained challenging;

- to partly address the budget gap for 2015-16, the PCC proposed a 1.99% precept rise;
- the Police Office and PCSO staff numbers stabilised ahead of schedule, and to avoid further reductions in frontline capacity, future savings increasingly need to come through collaboration, and better ways of working including estates and technology. The demand on the police continues to evolve and the Group was conscious of the ever increasing pressure on resources, including non-‘visible’ police activity;
- the process for allocating community safety funding / PCC Initiatives has further developed, and there is scope for partners including Community Safety Partnerships to develop programmes on a multi-year basis, subject to the submission of a business case. The Group reiterated its support for the community safety work undertaken through use of this funding and its importance to the achievement of the PCC’s Police and Crime Plan, and local Community Safety Plans.

### **Commissioner priorities**

The Police & Crime Plan 2014/17 outlined the Police & Crime Commissioner's priorities in Cleveland over the next few years and how these would be measured and delivered. The Plan is structured around five key priorities:

- Retaining and developing neighbourhood policing
- Ensuring a better deal for victims and witnesses
- Divert people from offending, with a focus on rehabilitation and the prevention of reoffending
- Working for better industrial and community relations
- Develop better coordination and partnership between agencies to make the best use of resources

It could be shown that the PCC has cognizance of local authority priorities as the first four of the five objectives contained in the Police and Crime Plan are aligned to priorities found in their community safety plans.

The remaining PCC objective may be considered as organisational, recognising the overarching managerial and commissioning role of the PCC’s office whereas the community safety plans of the local authorities focus entirely on addressing the issues of crime and anti-social behaviour as it affects their residents.

Anti-Social Behaviour was one of the main reasons for this review. All community safety partnerships featured ASB but the T&F Group recommended that the PCC and the Police and Crime Plan 2015/18 makes clear his commitments and objectives to residents who see this as a priority. This could then link directly to the objective of retaining and developing Neighbourhood Policing.

The reviews of Shared Services and Victims’ Services were not undertaken and remain outstanding.

## **PANEL RESPONSIBILITIES 2015/16**

The Police and Crime Panel is reminded of its role as scrutinising the actions and decisions of the Police and Crime Commissioner, thereby holding the PCC to account.

In addition, the Panel may wish to carry out one or more in-depth scrutiny reviews into a particular issue or concern. This may be a policy or performance issue in relation to priorities contained in the Police and Crime Plan.

Any additional work which the Panel may wish to undertake should be supportive and complementary to its statutory functions with the Panel acting as a critical friend; a supportive, but independent voice seeking to scrutinise the PCC in the interests of recommending appropriate changes and improvements. In addition, the work programme should avoid duplication and remain flexible and responsive.

It is, however, important that when identifying topics for additional work, the Panel takes into account the capacity and resources needed to carry out the investigation, to ensure that the review programme is manageable. It is also important to prioritise the issues identified, so that the work of the Panel is adding value.

The Panel is therefore asked to identify and consider suitable topics for scrutiny review during 2015/16. In selecting topics, the Panel may wish to consider whether:

- there is public demand / a real need for the review
- there is a genuine opportunity through the reviews to influence policy and practice
- there is a clear focus for the review, recognising that going 'deep and narrow' can have more impact than 'broad but shallow'

Consideration should also be given to the review topics agreed but not completed from 2014/15.

## **NEXT STEPS**

The Panel will forward items in relation to priorities contained in the Police and Crime Plan for inclusion on the Scrutiny Programme to the Chair of the PCP, or Head of Stockton Council's Democratic Services, by 1 September 2015 so that the Panel can set the 2015/16 scrutiny work programme at its meeting on 21 September 2015.

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