

Cleveland Police and Crime Panel

A meeting of Cleveland Police and Crime Panel was held on Thursday, 4th February, 2016.

Present: Cllr Norma Stephenson O.B.E (Chair), Cllr Charles Rooney(Vice-Chairman), Councillor Neil Bendelow, Cllr Ken Dixon, Gwen Duncan, Cllr Chris Jones, Cllr Jim Lindridge, Cllr Bob Norton, Cllr Bernie Taylor and Cllr Matthew Vickers

Officers: David Bond, Michael Henderson, Steven Hume and Margaret Waggott (SBC)

Also in attendance: Barry Coppinger (Police and Crime Commissioner); Simon Dennis; Joanne Hodgkinson; Michael Porter (Commissioner's Office); Temporary Deputy Chief Constable Simon Nickless (Cleveland Police)

Apologies: Cllr Jonathan Brash, Cllr David Coupe, Chu Chu Nwajobi and Cllr David Wilburn

1 Evacuation Procedure/ Mobile Phones

Members were advised of the evacuation procedures.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2015 were confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

4 Review of the Overall Budget Strategy

Members considered a report of a Task and Finish Group which had been formed by the full Police and Crime Panel and charged with undertaking scrutiny and analysis of the PCC's budget and the proposed precept for 2016/17, before consideration by the Panel.

Based on the evidence provided by the PCC and the PCC's Chief Finance Officer and the settlement from Government, the Members of the Task and Finish Group agreed that the increase to the precept proposed by the PCC should be 1.99%. This would enable investment where needed and ensure the financial stability of Cleveland Police until the results and impact of the review of police funding was known.

A member of the Panel asked that, when the precept was requested from residents, the income and expenditure was detailed on pie charts, to assist with understanding. The Commissioner explained that this had been raised at one of the Task and Finish Group meetings and some work in this regard had been undertaken and he gave a commitment that pie charts would be included in the precept request for 2016/17.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

5 The 2016/17 Precept Proposals

Guidance relating to the procedure to be followed when reviewing a proposed precept of the Commissioner had previously been provided, including the timescales for submitting a report to the Commissioner at the conclusion of the review.

Details of a report and notification from the Commissioner regarding the proposed precept for the financial year 2016/17 were considered by the Panel.

The Commissioner indicated that he had taken into account the following in making his proposal on the precept for 2016/17:-

- The Government's assumed choices that Police and Crime Commissioners would have to make in relation to local precepts in order to maintain overall funding levels.
- the financial impact on the people of Cleveland.
- the financial needs of the organisation as currently projected both for 2016/17 and in the future.
- the offer of a grant from the Government if he chose to freeze the precept.
- the limits imposed 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 discussed his proposals with the Chief Constable and had engaged and consulted with a wide partner base and the public's representatives.

The Commissioner also emphasized the need for the continued delivery of high levels of Policing and Crime services within the Cleveland area and that in light of his discussions with the Chief Constable and wider partners, he believed that a precept increase of 1.99% for 2016/17 best served the needs of the communities of Cleveland. He therefore proposed a precept increase of 1.99% for 2016/17.

The Panel had already considered a report from its Task and Finish Group, which had met on the 7th and 21st January 2016, and had scrutinised the Commissioner's overall budget strategy for 2016/17. The Group had also discussed current police funding assumptions, total funding projections, the precept, the Commissioners priorities, as well as local policing up to 2020. Based on the evidence provided by the Commissioner and the Commissioner's Chief Finance Officer, and the settlement from Government, the Task and Finish Group concluded that the precept proposed by the Commissioner should be 1.99%. This would enable investment where needed, and ensure the financial stability of Cleveland Police until the results and impact of the review of police funding were known.

Panel members also asked various questions about the precept report and made a number of comments regarding the Commissioner's proposal. The Panel then concluded by agreeing that the proposal should be supported.

RESOLVED that the Panel supports the Commissioner's proposed precept of 1.99% for 2016/17.

6 Members Questions to the Commissioner

A question was asked about policing levels in part of the Force area. The senior police officer present provided a general response to the question raised. It was explained that areas had been reviewed based on vulnerability, risk, crime levels and other factors. The force had then attempted to provide each area with the right mix of officers to solve problems and PCSOs had a key role in this.

7 Q3 Monitoring Report on Progress against Police and Crime Plan

Members considered a report that provided an update of performance scrutiny undertaken by the Police and Crime Commissioner to support the delivery of the priorities of the Police and Crime Plan for the Q3 2015/16.

The following summarises areas of discussion and issues raised:

- Your Force Your Voice - the Commissioner visited all wards in the force area on an annual basis. He stated his willingness to also visit any areas on request.
- public confidence information was not routinely collected by other police forces and those that did collect such information asked different questions, so comparison was not possible.
- reference was made to the crime statistics briefing that had recently been held for Panel members. It was agreed that this had been very useful and the officers involved were thanked.
- the level of crime was discussed and, in particular, the increase, for the year to date, for violence against the person and vehicle crime. Members were reminded that the force had changed its crime recording procedure to make it more robust and to ensure that there was reassessment/reassurance around historical crime/'no crime' incidents. In terms of violent crime it was suggested that some of the increase (particularly with regard to domestic abuse and sexual violence) was as a result of people being more willing to come forward, which resulted in victims receiving support and perpetrators being dealt with.
- Members were provided with details of what the Force was doing around violence against the person, including Local Area Action Agreements, a revamp of night-time economy processes (Operation Tranquillity) and Domestic Abuse (Operation Encompass)
- vehicle crime usually related to theft from cars.
- intelligence was analysed throughout the day and resources were directed where needed.
- violence without injury and violence with injury.
- nuisance ASB had gone down but this might be because of re-classification of incidents, to personal ASB.

- Members asked if the details provided for the local areas information could reflect the table for the force area e.g. could robbery be divided into Business and Personal etc?

- there was a query on the relationship between the Criminal Justice Board and the Commissioner. It was explained that the Commissioner sat on the criminal justice board, as did Simon Nickless, from the Force. They both examined statistics and held the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to account. As the CPS shrank the threshold for taking offences to court increased, as it would only take cases that it was confident it would win. This had been raised with the Director of Public Prosecutions and there had been lobbying for more resources for the CPS North East.

- Alcohol continued to be at the root of many crimes and the Commissioner supported the introduction of Minimum Unit Pricing and a reduction in the drink driving limit. A reduction in Scotland had seen a 17% drop in casualties.

RESOLVED that the report and discussion be noted/actioned as appropriate.

8 Programme of Engagement for Police and Crime Commissioner

Members considered a report that provided a brief update in relation to meetings attended by the PCC from November to January.

Discussion on this report could be summarised as follows:-

- Partnership working with Registered Social Landlords. At a local level the Police worked with Housing associations and local authorities anti social behaviour officers to tackle tenancy problems. All the Housing Associations were, or would be shortly signed up to E- CINS, this would mean that the Police, local authorities and Housing agencies would have access to the live-time system which would mean that every bit of information held about an individual, family, or location would be available and would help facilitate a coordinated approach. The Commissioner indicated that he would bring a progress report to a future meeting.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and the Panel receive a report on Partnership working with Registered Social Landlords, at a future meeting.

9 Decisions of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Members considered a report that provided an update in relation to the decisions taken/likely to be taken by the Police and Crime Commissioner, between 17 November 2015 and 27 January 2016.

It was noted that there was a process allowing organisations to apply for grant funding, the application needed to relate to at least one of the Commissioner's priorities.

It was noted that further information about decisions was available on the Commission's website.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

10 Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner PCC Election 2016 Preparations

The Panel received a report that informed members about the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Election Working Group.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

11 Police and Crime Commissioner's End of Term in Office Report

Members considered a report that provided information about key achievements during the Police and Crime Commissioners term in office, including progress against Police and Crime Plan priorities.

RESOLVED that the report be noted

12 Commissioner's Update

Members considered a report that provided an update on key activities and issues relating to the Commissioner and his office.

These activities/issues were:

- Cleveland Police - Strategic Leadership
- Police Recruitment
- Victims Services Commissioning
- Britain Together as One Nation
- Strategic Direction - Litigation Outcome
- Cleveland OPCC Regional Lead Role - Appointment of Independent Legally Qualified Chairs

A member asked for person specification details for police officers and PCSOs. It was likely that this was nationally set using national recruiting standards. Details would be provided to the Panel's members.

REOLVED that the report be noted and the person specifications, as detailed above, be provided.

13 Review of Victims' Services

Members received a report relating to the review of Victims' Services.

It was explained that a new provider for Victims' Services was being sought to commence services from 1 April 2016 and it was therefore felt that the timing of this review should be revisited to allow the successful applicant time to provide victims' referral services under the contract, before scrutinising the performance of the new service.

RESOLVED that the Victims' Services Review be rescheduled to take place during 2017/18, when the performance of the new service can be scrutinised.

14 Complaints Procedure

Members considered a report that asked the Panel to consider two matters. Firstly a proposed change to the handling of complaints about the conduct of the Police and Crime Commissioner ("PCC"). Secondly the Home Office's consultation on proposals to change the way complaints against PCCs were managed.

RESOLVED that:

1. Stockton on Tees Borough Council's Monitoring Officer act on the Panel's behalf in receiving complaints and necessary changes be made to the documentation relating to the complaints procedure.
2. Officers prepare a response to Home Office's consultation on proposals to change the way complaints against PCCs were managed, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Panel and that the agreed response be submitted to the Home office prior to the deadline of 10 March 2016.
3. a copy of the agreed response be circulated to Panel members.

15 Forward Plan

Members considered an indicative Forward Plan for 2016/17.

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.

16 Public Questions

There were no public questions.