

Cleveland Police and Crime Panel

A meeting of Cleveland Police and Crime Panel was held on Tuesday, 7th July 2020.

Present: Cllr Tony Riordan (Chair), Cllr Graham Cutler (Vice-Chair), Cllr Lee Cartwright, Cllr Barrie Cooper, Cllr Dorothy Davison (substitute for Mayor Andy Preston, Cllr Dave Hunter, Councillor Chris Jones, Mr Paul McGrath, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Vera Rider, Cllr Norma Stephenson O.B.E and Cllr Matthew Storey,

Officers: Julie Butcher, Peter Bell, Nigel Hart, Michael Henderson (Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council).

Also in attendance: Barry Coppinger (Police and Crime Commissioner), Simon Dennis, Lisa Oldroyd, Elise Pout (Commissioner's Office), Chief Constable Richard Lewis.

Apologies: Mayor Andy Preston and Cllr Steve Walmsley.

1 Appointment of Chair 2020/21

Moved by Councillor Steve Nelson, seconded by Councillor Matthew Storey that Councillor Norma Stephenson be appointed Chair of the Panel for the Municipal Year 2020/21.

Moved by Councillor Vera Rider, seconded by Councillor Graham Cutler that Councillor Tony Riordan be appointed Chair of the Panel for the Municipal Year 2020/21.

A Vote took place and it was agreed that Councillor Tony Riordan be appointed Chair of the Panel for the Municipal Year 2020/21.

RESOLVED that Councillor Tony Riordan be appointed Chair of the Panel for the Municipal Year 2020/21.

2 Appointment of Vice Chair 2020/21

Moved by Councillor Vera Rider, seconded by Councillor Tony Riordan that Councillor Graham Cutler be appointed Vice Chair of the Panel for the Municipal Year 2020/21.

Moved by Councillor Steve Nelson, seconded by Paul McGrath that Councillor Matthew Storey be appointed Vice Chair of the Panel for the Municipal Year 2020/21.

Moved by Councillor Lee Cartwright that Councillor Lee Cartwright be appointed Vice Chair of the Panel for the Municipal Year 2020/21.

A Vote took place and it was agreed that Councillor Graham Cutler be appointed Vice Chair of the Panel for the Municipal Year 2020/21.

RESOLVED that Councillor Graham Cutler be appointed Vice Chair of the Panel for the Municipal Year 2020/21.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

4 Minutes

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2020.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2020 be agreed.

5 Members' Questions to the Commissioner

The following question had been submitted by Councillor Barrie Cooper for response by the PCC:-

“How many blanket policies such as not attending none injury RTC’s or not attending burglar alarms do Cleveland Police have and how often are these policies reviewed?”

The PCC responded with:-

“Cleveland Police do not have a blanket policy for discounting Police activity in any aspect of policing, however in line with national standards, they have to apply a decision-making rationale to incidents that are reported. They have to focus on risk and the incidents that are most likely to cause harm, whilst allocating the most appropriate resource to attend.

The tool they use to assess the risk is provided by the College of Policing, named THRIVE.

The non-requirement to attend non-injury RTC has been law since the Road Traffic Act. If you have a collision with another vehicle and exchanged details, there were no injuries and there were no allegations of driving offences or poor driving then there is no requirement to report to Police.

In relation to other incidents that the Police do not routinely attend are Noise Nuisance, which is now a council managed issue. Audible burglar alarms when there is no evidence of forced entry or a property being insecure. This was a national decision when alarms were sensitive and being activated by high winds etc.

All above are risk assessed at the point of call, against THRIVE and if any more details are provided that support criminal activity then police resources would attend with the appropriate grading.”

Councillor Lee Cartwright asked a question regarding laws of the playing of ball games in residential areas and whether this was a Council or Police responsibility.

The PCC responded that the Police worked closely with Councils on these types of issues and that they were recognised as an ASB issue. Chief Constable Lewis also added that he would work with the Chief Inspector to take

the issue forward.

Councillor Tony Riordan asked a question regarding allocation of Neighbourhood Policing Police Constables and possible abstraction of NPT Officers in the Norton Ward.

Chief Constable Lewis responded that Cleveland Police did have to occasionally draw back on Neighbourhood Policing, but he would speak to the local police to see what had happened on this occasion and respond to the Panel.

6 Annual Report of the Commissioner 2019/20

Members considered the Commissioner's 2019 - 2020 Annual Report.

The report reflected a cross-section of the work the Commissioner had undertaken to implement his 71 point Police & Crime Plan, the Commissioner was grateful to the commitment and dedication of the staff in while in office; the Chief Constable Richard Lewis and all at Cleveland Police; the statutory partners and local agencies; many residents and community groups; and all those who work so hard in the communities, as organised groups, or as individuals, to keep the communities safe.

During the Commissioners term of office, he had attended over 700 community meetings to hear first-hand of the needs and challenges in the communities, which the Commissioner had either taken up directly, or had reflected in the policies, programmes and initiatives that had been developed.

There had been no shortage of challenges in 2019/20. Following an inspection, HMICFRS found the Force inadequate in its performance. The Commissioner was pleased his appointment of Chief Constable Richard Lewis in April 2019 was showing progress. The Commissioner could see evidence of improvement in several areas, reinforced by the positive attitude within the Force and the feedback he had received from the communities, but the Commissioner recognised there was still much for Cleveland Police to do. The Commissioner would continue to encourage and support this progress and monitor on behalf of residents of Cleveland through his wide-ranging scrutiny programme.

Ten years of Government austerity had also taken its toll across all public services. Having campaigned against cuts to policing over this period, The Commissioner welcomed the recognition investment was needed in policing and the extra resources distributed nationally in the autumn 2019, which had worked through in the spring 2020 to extra officers on the streets, however the Commissioner felt that this must be retained year on year and there must be the real time growth in spending this area needs and deserves.

The report also highlighted the wide-ranging activities undertaken to get a better deal for victims of crime; to help prevent offending and reoffending behaviour; to collaborate with public and third sector organisations; and to build stronger communities.

The Commissioner was immensely proud of all of this work, of how people in all organisations, and in the communities, rise to the challenge every day of the inequalities and injustices many of them face, and the part he had been able to play in helping and making progress.

The next year would be a real challenge, as everyone moved through Covid-19 and developed further responses to that, including different ways of working and living.

RESOLVED that the Annual Report be noted.

7 Commissioner's Update

Consideration was given to a report that provided the Panel with an overview of the activity of the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) since the last meeting held in February 2020.

The report highlighted the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and how the PCC and his Office had adapted and responded to the unprecedented situation, and provided specific updates aligned to the priorities of the Police & Crime Plan.

The report was considered in conjunction with progress detailed in the PCC Scrutiny and Decisions of the PCC reports. Collectively, these reports provided progress in all areas of the Police & Crime Plan.

The PCC Performance report for this reporting period had been replaced by the PCC Annual Report, which provided details of performance activity against the Police & Crime Plan 2019/20.

The report highlighted the following key areas:-

- COVID-19
- Investing in Our Police
- A Better Deal for Victims
- Tackling Offending and Re-Offending
- Working Together to Make Cleveland Safer/Securing the Future of Our Communities

A member asked a question regarding the issue of young people becoming engaged in serious crime and violence. In response it was noted that the statistics could be taken down to ward level and that Cleveland Police work constructively with minority groups. Cleveland Police had also been using "Stop and Search" with good success. There was also a desire from Cleveland Police to intervene at the earliest age possible. Members also noted that despite having the third highest violent crime rate in the country, Cleveland had failed to qualify for Home Office Serious Violence funding. Following raising concerns in a letter to the Home Secretary and directly with the Policing Minister on 23 June the PCC held a call with the Policing Minister and Home Office colleagues. The PCC presented the Minister with research that had been conducted by his office, highlighting the scale and cost of violence in Cleveland and a proposal

for a Cleveland Unit for Reducing Violence to prevent and address the issue. The Minister welcomed discussions and offered ongoing support from the Home Office to develop and consider these plans further.

The PCC continued to explore alternative funding options to support the prevention of young people becoming engaged in serious crime and violence, and was instrumental in bringing together key stakeholders to discuss the possibility of bids to the Youth Endowment COVID-19 Fund which had been established to fund engagement activity with vulnerable children and young people that could be undertaken remotely or whilst adhering to social distancing guidelines. This was in response to concerns that most youth outreach work had had to be paused during COVID-19, including a range of targeted youth intervention projects funded by the OPCC. A range of local bids had been submitted to the fund.

The PCC would send a copy of submission that was sent to Government to the Panel for their information.

A member asked a question regarding the HAT scheme and if the scheme would be rolled out to further areas. In response it was noted that it was hoped that the scheme would be rolled out further and that results were starting to show that crime was reducing, public money being saved, and users were starting to turn their lives around.

With regard the issue of off-road motorbikes it was noted that this was still an on-going issue, Cleveland Police were using drones and deploying officers where possible. The public were being urged to keep calling the 101 service when incidents take place.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

8 Decisions of the Commissioner

Consideration was given to a report that provided an update on decisions made by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and the Forward Plan.

The Police and Crime Commissioner made all decisions unless specifically delegated within the Scheme of Consent / Delegation. All decisions demonstrated that they were soundly based on relevant information and that the decision-making process was open and transparent.

A copy of the Forward Plan was attached to the report and published on the PCC website which included items requiring a decision in the future.

Each decision made by the PCC was recorded on a decision record form with supporting background information appended. Once approved it was published on the PCC website.

Decisions relating to private / confidential matters would be recorded; although, it may be appropriate that full details were not published.

Decisions made since the last meeting of the Police and Crime Panel were attached to the report.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

9 Commissioner's Scrutiny Programme

Consideration was given to a report that provided the Panel with an update on the PCC's scrutiny programme.

Holding the Chief Constable to account was the key duty of the Police & Crime Commissioner and must encompass all the functions of the Chief Constable and functions of those who are under the Chief Constable's direction and control.

The PCC had a range of scrutiny approaches in place to engage with the Chief Constable and hold Cleveland Police to account. These take place on a daily, weekly and monthly schedule and include a range of meetings, data and feedback from partners and the public.

Changes were made to the scrutiny regime in July 2019 that resulted in a thematic approach to scrutiny across the priorities within the Police and Crime Plan and a greater depth of information was provided by Cleveland Police in order for the PCC to hold the force to account. The new approach could be seen in the sharper questioning and clearer minutes, which were attached to the report for information.

Changes in scrutiny and more targeted questioning had started to see the evidence of improvement in the Force, for example:-

- A new Standard Operating Process for postal requisitions has been implemented by the Force providing a distinct approach for domestic abuse related offences
- A focus on improving compliance to the Victims Code of Practice
- Recent backlogs with Op Encompass have now been cleared
- Public Protection Notices compliance has improved dramatically to 99%

The processes would continue to develop and it had been made clear that there would be greater use of independent scrutiny approaches such as Internal Audit (Joint Independent Audit Committee), internal scrutiny panels such as the Out of Court Disposals, the Use of Force and Domestic Abuse Scrutiny Panels as well as identifying those services which would benefit from a wider multi agency scrutiny approach.

During 2020/21 the Cleveland Police Service Improvement Programme (SIP) would be a key feature of the scrutiny programme, where SIP programme control documents would be routinely reviewed, and progress tracked against the programme stage plan.

OPCC representatives would attend the Delivery and Assurance groups for each of the SIP work streams and would provide feedback on respective

programme activities including impact, highlighting and/or identifying any risks of opportunities that may affect delivery and provide performance pack to inform the PCC and External Assurance Process for SIP. Information and evidence that we find will also be shared with HMICFRS to correlate with the evidence they were finding from the Force.

Assurance would also be provided by linking the scrutiny programme to the various internal and external forums and on a quarterly basis. Wider scrutiny arrangements are also in place including (and not limited to):

- Ethics Committee
- Feedback from complaints
- Issues raised at community meetings and focus groups

The Commissioner was now welcoming public questions around topical issues which he would put to the Force as part of his scrutiny programme.

March 2020 brought the unprecedented situation of the covid-19 worldwide public health crisis. In order to ensure effective oversight and scrutiny of the Force's preparedness and handling of the situation the Commissioner utilised the technology available to maintain scrutiny and accountability processes as normal and the Commissioner put a number of additional levels of scrutiny in place which included:

- Weekly Scrutiny and Accountability meetings with the Chief Constable
- Daily briefings from the Strategic Command Group
- Daily briefings from the Tactical Command Group

The weekly Scrutiny and Accountability meetings were established to provide a weekly supportive and appreciative scrutiny of the work of Cleveland Police as they work in conjunction with Local Resilience Forum partners, in relation to the Covid 19 Coronavirus public health scenario. The Commissioner asked members of the public for questions which were put to the Force. The meeting was an opportunity to put over 25 questions submitted by the public directly to Richard Lewis and his senior team. Topics ranged from police powers, travel for exercise, social distancing and queries about MOT tests.

As a result of those meetings, key questions were then regularly put to the Force and the meetings between the Chief Constable and the Commissioner were undertaken by video conference and relayed to the public in order that they could hear the key messages about the Coronavirus from the Force and his office.

The weekly scrutiny and accountability discussions between the Chief Constable and the Commissioner covered a range of topics both force and Covid related and included:-

- Operational updates
- Knife crime
- Communications

- Guidance
- Vulnerable communities
- Personal Protective equipment
- Fixed Penalty Notices
- Covid related scams
- Eston Hills

Since the previous Police and Crime Panel meeting the following meetings had taken place and the minutes were attached to the report:

- 10 February
- 9 March
- 6 April
- 14 May

Since the last update to the Panel there had been a Working Together meeting on the 25 February 2020. The minutes were also attached to the report.

In addition to the meetings above, the Commissioner continued to attend the following to complement his scrutiny programme:

- Daily review of the Control Room and Serious Incident Logs;
- Weekly accountability meetings with the Chief Constable;
- Attend at least one local area meeting in each of Cleveland's neighbourhood police team areas.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

10 Police and Crime Plan Strategic Document

Consideration was given to a report that provided the Panel with details of the extension to the existing Police and Crime Plan, which had previously been refreshed in 2018.

The Panel noted that the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Cleveland's Police and Crime Plan was a statutory document. Requirements for the Plan were set out in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Policing Protocol Order 2011. The Plan must have regard to the Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) issued by the Home Secretary.

Following the Government's decision to postpone local elections in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Panel noted that Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) would remain in post until 2021 when it would be possible to hold an election safely. The Panel agreed that the Strategic Programme 2020-2021 would provide a solid set of foundations for how the PCC would hold the force to account for its improvement and how it will help victim services, criminal justice agencies and the wider community recover from the Covid-19 crisis and ensure the innovative partnership work continued to make Cleveland a safer place to be.

The Panel noted that the Commissioner's Plan would maintain his commitment

to the five objectives that he had been elected upon:

- Investing in our police
- A better deal for victims and witnesses
- Tackling re-offending
- Working together to make Cleveland safer
- Securing the future of our communities

The Panel accepted the extension to the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan and were content that the Commissioner could now publish the extension to the Police and Crime Plan.

RESOLVED that the issuing of the Police and Crime Plan – Strategic Programme 2020-2021 be agreed.

11 Police and Crime Panel Annual Report 2019/20

The Panel was presented with the Cleveland Police and Crime Panel Annual Report 2019/20.

The Annual Report covered the following key areas:-

- Role of the Police and Crime Panel
- Cleveland Police and Crime Panel Membership 2019/2020
- Key Activities and Achievements
- The Panel's Core Programme
- Annual Report of the Cleveland Police and Crime Commissioner
- HMICFRS Integrated PEEL Assessment Report
- Operation Phoenix
- National Police and Crime Panel Conference
- Task and Finish Scrutiny
- Police and Crime Commissioner Achievement Report
- Complaints

RESOLVED that the Cleveland Police and Crime Panel Annual Report 2019/20 be agreed.

12 Scrutiny Work Programme of the Panel 2020/21

Consideration was given to a report that sought to set the Police and Crime Panel Scrutiny Work Programme for 2020/21.

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

The Panel was asked to identify and consider suitable topics for scrutiny review during 2020/21. In selecting topics, the Panel considered 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'

The only review topic that was on the Work Programme at present was the Overall Budget Strategy (Annual Review). The Panel were asked to consider the capacity and resources needed to carry out the review programme to ensure that it was manageable. It was suggested that one further topic be added to the Work Programme. An issue that was raised by Members at a previous meeting was the Communication Strategy.

The matter of the overall budget strategy had been reviewed annually and subject to amendment continues to be scrutinised by a Task and Finish Group in order to facilitate sufficient time and analysis to the financial arrangements of the PCC and commissioned services. The number of agenda items for a full Police and Crime Panel meeting might preclude sufficient scrutiny of budget and its impact on the level of precept set, and therefore in recent years a Task and Finish Group had undertaken this work on behalf of the full Panel. This review would report in February 2021.

The allocation of officers was discussed as a possible item for scrutiny. The Chief Constable outlined that it maybe more useful for him to provide the Panel with the rational for the allocation of officers and then provide the Panel with a written report at a later date. A request was also made to look at the use of custody suites throughout the Cleveland Police area.

Members agreed the following Police and Crime Panel Scrutiny Work Programme for 2020/21:-

- Task and Finish Group - Communication Strategy
- Task and Finish Group - Overall Budget Strategy

RESOLVED that the following be agreed as the Police and Crime Panel Scrutiny Work Programme for 2020/21 and the following Members be identified

to sit on each Group:-

- Task and Finish Group - Communication Strategy – Councillor Steve Nelson, Councillor Matthew Storey, Councillor Vera Rider and Councillor Lee Cartwright.
- Task and Finish Group - Overall Budget Strategy – Councillor Graham Cutler, Councillor Norma Stephenson, Councillor Barrie Cooper, Councillor Lee Cartwright and Paul McGrath.

13 Forward Plan

Members were presented with the Forward Plan for the Panel.

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.

14 Public Questions

Members were informed that there were no Public Questions.