



# Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel

Hosted by Somerset County Council Democratic Services



## Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018

### **Present:**

#### **Local Authority Representatives:**

Asher Craig (Bristol City Council), Stuart Dowding (West Somerset District Council), Mike Drew (South Gloucestershire Council), Afzal Shah (Bristol City Council), Mark Shelford (Bath & North East Somerset), Martin Wale (South Somerset District Council), Jane Warmington (Taunton Deane Borough Council), Mark Weston (Bristol City Council), Josh Williams (Somerset County Council) and Roz Willis (North Somerset Council).

#### **Independent Members:**

Richard Brown, Joseph Mullis, Andy Sharman and Clare Torrible

#### **Police and Crime Commissioner and Supporting Staff:**

Sue Mountstevens (Police and Crime Commissioner), John Smith (Chief Executive), Joanna Coulon (Criminal Justice and Commissioning Officer), Julian Gale (Strategic Manager) Patricia Jones (Principal Democratic Services Officer).

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Councillors Ashton, Beath, Bown, Goddard and Parham.

### **2. Public Question Time**

None.

### **4. Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **5. Minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

**Resolved – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.**

## 6. Chair's Business

### Home Office Event – Serious Violence and Knife Crime

The Chair reported that he had raised the underlying problems of the police funding arrangements and the adverse effect of “damping” effect with the Policing Minister. Nick Hurd stated that funding reviews would continue to address Police funding shortages and the funding formula would form part of these discussions.

## 7. Chief Constable Presentation

The Panel received a detailed presentation from Andy Marsh, Chief Constable. A copy of the presentation material was circulated at the meeting and in summary covered:-

- Resetting the identity of the Constabulary to provide an outstanding policing service for everyone, with an emphasis on care, courage, inclusivity and learning
- Finance and resources
- Right equipment and the positive reception from staff and the public
- Right people – overall increase of 2.9% in all BME Police staff
- Six Pillars of Neighbourhood and Partnerships
- Mini Police
- Knife Crime
- Serious Violence and Organised Crime
- Outstanding Results

Below is a summary of the discussion that followed:-

- “Cuckooing” in the criminal sense was described as the infiltration of large organisations by organised crime groups.
- The Chief Constable was asked to clarify the percentage of officers using the new technology. It was reported that the force was using its most influential leaders to ensure that less motivated staff did not feel excluded or under-valued. The Records Management System was an area that continued to require attention. Robotics would revolutionise society and he was committed to this area of work. He would continue to blog the organisation.
- It was acknowledged that West Midlands Police were undertaking valuable work around a representative workforce. Good practice had been adopted by Avon and Somerset with positive results.
- The Panel commended the proactive diversity work undertaken in the community. It was suggested that communities were more alert and supportive of the current approach to stop and search. Disciplined sport was highlighted as a proven distraction to pursuing crime. It was acknowledged that stop and search was a corrosive power when used incorrectly and the support of the community was valuable.
- The Panel commended the Chief Constable on the culture he was endeavouring to create.

- It was reported that the use of bikes was making Police officers more visible. Any opportunity for officers to attend Parish Council meeting would be welcomed.
- The Panel requested information/evidence of any on-going cooperation, amalgamation of services or savings emerging from the co-location of Police and Fire at Portishead – intelligence, operational planning, staff logistics, fleet etc. The Commissioner stated that she accepted the concerns in relation to the pace of change and advised that a more formal approach to looking at areas in union was planned for the new year. The Chief Constable made the point that successful collaborations emerged from progressive mindsets and strong capabilities and resourcing - Partners could not be forced to collaborate. Data analytics was highlighted as a success story that would transform services for the better once the barriers around information sharing were addressed.

The Panel stated that collaboration must be led from the top to drive the right culture through both organisations.

- County Lines enforcement needed substantial capabilities and national resources to address and significant steps were being taken to reduce demand. In Avon and Somerset, the market was predominantly vulnerable young people who continued to be attracted to drugs and violent crime for a variety of reasons. Reference was made to a drug intervention project underway in Bristol focussing on not criminalising young people and redirecting them to rehabilitation to prevent deaths. The data associated with the County Lines business regime and the use of mobile phones was overwhelming. It was noted that dedicated officers at the University of Bristol and UWE have been supporting work to tackle drug misuse. It was recognised that cannabis often exacerbated mental health issues.

It was agreed that Councillor Shelford would be provided with an update in relation to his query around a Police operation in Bath and CCTV evidence.

- The Panel invited the Chief Constable to comment on the constabulary's use of drones. It was noted that he would like to create headroom to invest and in the meantime the would evaluate the success of a the first drone in operation in Avon & Somerset.
- The Panel asked the Chief Constable what message could usefully be given to the public to assist the Police in reducing the 70% of calls that were non-crime related. He confirmed that the data available to the Police was excellent – the location of every officer in the force could be pin pointed. In terms of demand, the Police were often the “first and last resort” which required them to deal with incidents that did not automatically fall within their remit – collisions, sudden deaths and crises. NHS information sharing was a particular obstacle and the force would continue in its efforts to identify and work with Partners on the challenges of service provision.

The Panel thanked the Chief Constable for his time.

## **8. Scrutiny of the Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan**

The Chief Financial Officer introduced the report and outlined the status of the MTFP and key planning objectives. It was noted that a number of areas were still to be finalised before the Budget was agreed in February 2019.

The Panel noted:-

- All numbers in the report prepared for publication were based on a £12 Precept increase, a flat grant and a 2% pay increase. This would achieve a balanced budget for 2019/20 followed by incremental deficits.
- However, the overall 2019/20 funding settlement for policing announced by the Home Office provided an additional £3.3m core grant funding, £2.8m pension funding and flexibility for PCCs to raise additional money locally from council tax by up to £2 a month for the average band D household. The position in relation to additional funding to cover the pension costs shortfall needed to be clarified.
- Savings plans remained key but were not as onerous and there would be a surplus situation next year which would free up investment funds. The surplus would not be permanent but would provide opportunity to look at investment in the short term.

The Commissioner stated that additional funding would underpin vital recruitment and provide extra resources to tackle serious violence, burglary, county lines and IT infrastructure. The position was more favourable today than was envisaged. It was accepted that an annual increase of £24.00 was a big ask for residents.

The CFO agreed to contact LA partners and cross check the figures in relation to new properties/increases in council tax base.

The Panel invited the Chief Constable to comment on the sustainability of the force given the deficit still emerging in the medium term and the potential for more savings ahead. The Chief Constable advised the Panel that he considered the force to be sustainable but difficult choices would have to be made. Financial constraints often meant that services become unrecognisable as opposed to not delivered. The additional funding available would mean money to improve Burglary outcomes. There was plenty of scope for ad-hoc collaboration and a more layered model of policing.

It was agreed that the Panel would receive a final update on the Budget/MTFP at its Development Day on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

## **9. Commissioner's Update Report**

The Commissioner updated the Panel on the following areas:-

- Police and Crime Plan Refresh – the OPCC would be grateful for any key literature or new data to assist with a new process for maintaining an up-to-date Police and Crime Needs Assessment.
- A report by HMICFRS on Policing and Mental Health recognised that mental health services were experiencing a national crisis with consequences for the Police, who were without the necessary skills to offer effective support. It was noted that the Police Service was heavily relied upon because a 24/7 service is provided and the services best placed to support do not offer the same. The Commissioner made the point that care plans advise service users to call 999 which is unacceptable and should be addressed.
- Out of Court Disposals - a two-year pilot has commenced which has seen the introduction of 6 new staff roles that will carry out the function of needs assessing offenders who are in receipt of an OOD (disposal options for low level offending). The hope was to engage the Constabulary in

more effective early intervention work. It was agreed that the Panel would be provided with an update in 6 months to assess the impact of the pilot and changing behaviour.

- Victims Services Recommissioning – the Commissioner thanked Councillor Willis for her report and apologised that it was not possible to publish her findings at this stage in the process. Following the procurement process for the recommissioning of victim services and the formal standstill period, notification of contract award would be made in December 2018 for the services specified in the report.

As part of the OPCC's work with NHS England to recommission Sexual Assault Referral Centre services across the South West, work had commenced in collaboration with Clinical Commissioning Groups across Avon and Somerset to recommission therapeutic services for victims of sexual assault. The Commissioner placed on record her thanks for the valuable work undertaken by her staff.

- Regional Updates - a number of ongoing projects were being reviewed on a regional basis. This included the recent agreement to adopt a regional approach to prison intelligence and a review of the employment model for the existing South West Forensics project.

In relation to Tri Force arrangements with Gloucestershire and Wiltshire, Avon and Somerset had been seeking to agree a revised model for the project to address the issues raised in a number of reviews making recommendations about the HR, performance and Systems arrangements for the existing Tri Force Specialist Operations project (firearms, firearms training, roads and dogs). It had not been possible to reconcile Avon and Somerset's desire to improve the model with the other partners' requirements to return control of assets and staff locally. Avon and Somerset would therefore leave the Specialist Operations Collaboration in April 2019. The existing 3 force Major Crime team were not affected by these discussions.

Police in Taunton were now co-located with Taunton Deane Borough Council. The new Taunton Police Station included a Police enquiry desk, a base for local Police officers and the Coroner's Office. Trinity Road Police Station would move next year following completion of work on Kenneth Steele House.

Below is a summary of the issues and questions raised by Panel Members:-

- Councillor Shelford reported that a relatively inexpensive way of boosting Police presence in Bath would be to open the Police enquiry desk 24/7 in the One Stop Shop. The Commissioner agreed to make enquiries.
- Andy Sharman congratulated the Commissioner on the Race Equality work undertaken in Bristol which was recognised at the Global Equality and Diversity Awards for its transparency. It was noted that the both Avon and Somerset and West Yorkshire had been highlighted at the PCP National Conference for work around Modern Day Slavery.
- Councillor Willis emphasised that current mental health provision was not meeting demand. The Commissioner stated she was not aware of a significant change proposed by the NHS that would impact the Police. Referencing the scrutiny he carried along with Councillor Willis, Joseph Willis stated that this provided a lever to raise the profile and to include stakeholder responsibility. There was general agreement that the current status of the Police, that of a proxy Mental Health

service provider, was unacceptable. The Commissioner emphasised that current arrangements could not adequately address the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

- Councillor Willis stated the news in respect of the Tri-Force collaboration was disappointing. It was apparent that the fundamental impasse with colleagues could not be reconciled. It was good news that the cost to A&S was negligible because the force had been cross-subsidising. The Commissioner was asked how she would ensure that future collaboration achieved value for money.

The Commissioner stated that the breakdown of arrangements represented a loss in resilience which was both disappointing and a backward step. However, the net donation had been compromised to the point where it was no longer sustainable and it was now essential to consider the right strategy and Policing requirement for A&S.

- The Commissioner clarified that she had bought all speed cameras in Somerset for £1. Bristol's belonged to the City Council.

## **10. Link Member Reports**

The Panel considered the proposal to structure the Link Member roles under the four Police and Crime Plan priorities. It was noted that the OPCC contact would arrange quarterly briefing sessions for the Link Members to brief Members on key issues and identify opportunities for Link Members to contribute to specific areas of work. Link Members would continue to participate in existing meeting mechanisms, for example through membership of the Business Crime Forum and the Reducing Reoffending Executive Board. It was proposed that Link Members report back on activity through standing reports to the Police and Crime Panel meeting.

The proposed structuring of meetings under the four pillars was welcomed. The Panel suggested it would be helpful and would promote better interaction at meetings if an advanced schedule of dates could be provided and any papers supplied to Members one week beforehand. Joseph Mullis highlighted the drawbacks associated with ad hoc arrangements which hindered participation and the ability to influence or usefully feed back to the Panel on progress.

The CEO stated that the Commissioner has set a clear direction to be proactive and collaborate with the Panel. He confirmed that he was happy to set the dates and provide an agenda in advance of meetings.

Councillor Shelford stated that Link Member reporting was essentially a snap shot in time and addendums to reports would be naturally considered and published.

### **Business Crime**

Andrew Sharman reported that since writing his report, the SWBC Centre had been approached by accredited partners to revisit the regional model. Information sharing remained an on-going issue.

### **Development of the Police and Crime Plan**

Councillor Craig reported on a workshop session with key stakeholders on 9 November in relation to consider the revisions to the Police and Crime Plan. It was noted that principles underpinning the Plan, key objectives and the supporting performance framework were discussed. The workshop generated useful discussion and drafting was now taking place.

Real collaboration efforts of key players were evident at the workshop and Karin Takel (OPCC) was commended on the structure of the day.

### **Representative Workshop**

Councillor Shah confirmed he would report to the next meeting and reflect the range of work that was taking place.

## **11. Standing Complaints Report**

The Panel considered and a report of the Chief Executive (OPCC) providing an oversight of all complaints made against the Commissioner.

### **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Resolved -that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the following item, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended).

The Panel received an update on a current complaint. It was agreed that the Panel would receive a formal report and timeline if the matter was escalated to the Panel.

## **12. Proposal to amend the Panel Rules of Procedure**

The Panel considered a report to amend paragraphs 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 of the Panel's Rules of Procedure, which if agreed, will open up the Panel's chairing arrangements to the Independent Members of the Panel. The proposal was moved by the Chair and seconded by Councillor Willis and on being put to the vote was unanimously carried (12 members voting in favour).

**Resolved – that paragraphs 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 of the Panel's Rules of Procedure be amended to open up the Panel's chairing arrangements to the Independent Members of the Panel.**

## **13. Panel Arrangements**

The Panel was invited to note the amendments by the Constituent Authorities and formally adopt the revised document. This was agreed.

## **14. Panel Costs Report**

Julian Gale reported that the Panel was running at the limit of the Home Office funding. It was considered prudent at this point to advise the Panel that any unusual or unexpected expenditure would result in the triggering of the indemnity mechanism. However, this was not

anticipated and it remained the intention for all direct costs associated with the running of the Panel to be contained within the Home Office funding allocation of £69,860.

This was noted.

#### **15. Work Programme Report**

The Panel considered the updated work programme. It was noted that a presentation on Data analytics would now take place on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

Councillor Craig drew attention to the Charter on Modern Slavery which committed councils to proactively vetting their own supply chain to ensure no instances of modern slavery were taking place. It was noted that the charter went further than law or guidance, providing a series of commitments that councils can make to ensure their supply chains are not contributing to modern slavery. She invited the other Constituent Authorities to consider signing up and agreed to circulate an information link.

#### **16. Date of next Meeting**

- 30<sup>th</sup> January 2019 10.00am (Albemarle Centre, Taunton)
- 5<sup>th</sup> February 2019 at 10.30am (formal Panel Meeting, Weston Town Hall)

(The meeting ended at 1pm )

Chairman