



Minutes of the Avon and Somerset Police & Crime Panel 17th March 2022 at 10.45am

The Luttrell Room, County Hall, Somerset

Present:

Local Authority and Independent Member Representatives:

Heather Shearer (Mendip, Chair), Chris Booth (Somerset West and Taunton), Nicola Clark (South Somerset), Asher Craig (Bristol City), Peter Crew (North Somerset), Jonathan Hucker (Bristol City), Julie Knight (Independent Member), Franklin Owusu-Antwi (South Gloucestershire), Alastair Singleton (Bath and North East Somerset), Pat Trull (South Gloucestershire Council), Andy Wait (Bath and North East Somerset), Richard Westwood (North Somerset).

Host Authority support staff:

Scott Wooldridge – Monitoring Officer
Patricia Jones – Panel Lead Officer
Pippa Triffitt – Panel Administrative Support

Police and Crime Commissioner and Constabulary/Support Staff:

Mark Shelford – Police and Crime Commissioner
Alice Ripley – Chief of Staff
Marc Hole – Head of Commissioning and Partnerships
Ben Valentine – Strategic Planning and Performance Officer
Victoria Mitton - Senior Commissioning and Policy Officer
Det/Inspector Jo Mines – Constabulary Lead Integrated Offender Management

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Janet Keen, Gary Davies, Richard Brown, Councillor Lisa Stone and Councillor Neil Bloomfield.

2. Public Question Time

None received.

3. Declarations of interest

There were no new declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 1st February 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 1st February 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

5. Chair's business

None to report.

6. Host Authority Report

The Panel considered a report from the Host Authority Monitoring Officer setting out the resignation of Somerset County Council (SCC) as Host Authority for the Panel.

The Panel was advised that Host Authority support to the Panel was becoming challenging due to other corporate governance resourcing priorities, primarily the Local Government Reorganisation for the five councils in Somerset. It was emphasised that due to the high level of corporate governance support required to achieve Local Government Reorganisation on 1st April 2023, the Monitoring Officer at Somerset County Council and other corporate services will not have capacity in 2022 to support the Panel.

It was reported that all 9 authorities had agreed to the additional £5,000 funding contribution requested by the Panel for 2022/23 and a formal letter of resignation to the constituent authorities would follow this meeting.

Discussion followed. Members drew attention to the Lead Officer support arrangements in place since the Panel's inception and the Panel's explicit wish to retain this service when the Host Authority transferred to the new Host Authority. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that the postholder holds a dedicated job description and performs over 80% of her duties for the Panel, rendering the post subject to a Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of

Employment) Regulations (TUPE). The Panel noted that the post holder would therefore become an employee of the new Host Authority and transfers to the new employer on existing terms and conditions.

Members highlighted the importance of managing the proposed change within a reasonable timescale. The Monitoring Officer was requested to address the issue as expeditiously as possible and within 3 months if possible in order to allay staffing concerns and ensure that business remained on track. The Monitoring Officer was requested to include the Panel's most recent set of accounts with the letter to the constituent authorities setting out SCC's resignation. It was recognised that any underspend on this budget would be ringfenced and will transfer with the Panel once the new Host Authority has been confirmed.

7. Commissioner's Update

With reference to the detailed report provided to the Panel, the Commissioner updated the Panel on the following current activities and work areas:-

Covid 19 - changes to working arrangements to reflect removal of national restrictions, continued safety measures, multi-agency co-ordination stood down from end March.

Recruitment/Uplift – focus on retention to address challenge in leavers impacting on local stretch target; recruitment and training intakes increased to ensure that our final uplift target is achieved by March 2023.

Estates - work on track in Lewis House (Bath); Trinity Road planning application in April addressing outstanding planning concerns; business case for Yeovil / South Somerset expected in September; scoping opportunities for fire colocation ongoing.

Fire Governance - Fire Reform White Paper still awaited.

Police and Crime Plan – Final Plan published with updated Medium Term Financial Plan summary. Meetings had taken place with all Community Safety Partnership (CSP) areas and development of local plans is underway.

Key appointments – Process to appoint substantive Chief Finance Officer underway and the Panel will hold a confirmatory hearing on 26th April 2022. Review of Disproportionality in the Criminal Justice System - report launch and communications plans, partners requested to respond to recommendations to start implementation.

Consultation and Engagement - Engagement Plans in development.

Partnerships and Commissioning - Violence Reduction Units, Reducing Reoffending and Criminal Justice updates; Victims Bill consultation submission.

Governance - Scrutiny Panel findings, Complaints Overview.

PCC National Economic and Cyber Portfolio – PCC appearance at Justice Select Committee on Fraud and the Justice System; letter to all PCCs on prioritising Policing of fraud, national media appearance to raise awareness of ‘money flipping scams’ and engagement in Online Safety Bill Working Group.

PCC Review – Part 2 ongoing focusing on PCC role in partnership working. Specified Information Order – information on oversight of complaints in development. PCC Succession Plan to be brought to the Panel AGM for approval.

A limited discussion followed due to the number of items on the agenda and it was agreed that any additional queries outside of the meeting.

8. Performance Summary – National Police and Crime Measures

The Panel noted that the Specified Information Order places a duty on all PCCs to publish certain information within specified timeframes to ensure the public have the information they need to hold them to account at the ballot box. The Home Office amended the Specified Information Order to require PCCs to provide a narrative on force performance against the Government’s crime measures and HMICFRS force performance reports.

The Panel noted the Performance update Quarter ending December 2021 provided by Ben Valentine Strategic Planning and Performance Officer.

9. Standing Complaints Report

The Panel considered a report from Alice Ripley Chief of Staff, providing a rolling summary of complaints made against the Commissioner.

It was noted that no new complaints have been recorded against the Commissioner since the last Panel meeting. However, the Panel’s Lead Officer and Lead Member for complaints (Gary Davies) had retained oversight of an email received in connection with a television appearance by the Commissioner. The conclusion reached was that the email amounted to

criticism of the Commissioner and was not a conduct complaint in substance, relying as it did on the writer's personal opinion of the Commissioner after watching an interview. As such, this representation had not been recorded.

It was noted that a new complaint had been recorded regarding the former PCC Sue Mountstevens. To date, the allegations have not yet been confirmed by the complainant.

10. Work Programme

The Chair reported that the Panel was approaching the end of its work programme for 2021/22. Remaining meetings included a Confirmatory Hearing for the role of Chief Finance Officer which would take place on 26th April 2022 and a proactive scrutiny event on 30th March when the Panel would look at serious violence in the context of rape and serious sexual assault and domestic abuse.

11. Scrutiny Topic – Integrated Offender Management

The Panel received a detailed report and presentation on Integrated Offender Management (IOM), introduced in 2009 to bring a cross-agency response to crime and reoffending threats faced by local communities. The Panel was advised that its aim was for the most prolific and problematic offenders to be prioritised and jointly managed by Police and the Probation Service with the support of other partner agencies including Local Authorities through the commissioning of services.

Below is a summary of the key points made in the presentation:-

- Avon and Somerset conducted a Review of IOM in September 2020 followed by a series of recommendations to establish the most effective pathways and intervention routes
- It advocated a local approach to IOM at LA level with the Reducing Reoffending Resolve Board (set up in 2018) sitting above for governance purposes.
- The Nation IOM strategy published in 2020 introduced a clearer Governance structure including a central IOM unit and a central IOM Strategic Oversight Group, joint Police/Probation offender supervision, local leaderships and partnerships, and holistic offender supervision.
- The Panel noted the cost of offending before IOM versus the cost of offending during IOM - £4, 446, 448 and £2, 236, 662.
- A profile of the key characteristics of high harm offenders was provided including trends, distribution and management.

- Local delivery progress included an uplift of 23 Police officers and 14 Police Constable Degree Apprentices.
- The top priorities for IOM in the context of pathways and rehabilitation were reported as Education/training and Employment, thinking/behaviour, Accommodation and Drugs. Housing provision was recognised as a high and unmet need that frequently presents as an issue for the offenders managed.
- South West Regional Homelessness Prevention Team – the number of beds for higher complexity cases will increase from 34 to 57 from October 2022. Homelessness Prevention Taskforce Panels are also embedded in all Probation Delivery Units to develop co-ordinated and joint responses to assist those identified as at risk of homelessness pre-release and prevent rough sleeping.
- Next steps:-
 - on-going consultation around the FLEX cohort with the Local Authorities to ensure that we have the local aspect covered (dependant on uplift and partner resourcing)
 - co-location of services
 - the production of a joint agency internal and external communication strategy
 - ensure those staff coming into the fold are skilled and competent to manage
 - develop and embed performance measures looking at best practice nationally
 - catalogue and develop Pathways to support IOM managed offenders.

Discussion followed and the Panel drew attention to the following:-

- an under-represented workforce and the need to recruit from these demographics
- Accommodation – a request to do more in this area, supportive of the prisoner building homes initiative.
- The impact of a challenging economy on the public and in turn crime and how the Police are responding to this.
- Lack of national training in terms of Police Offender Managers - can this be resolved?

Action:

(1) The Panel PCP would like to meet again in 12 months' time to keep updated with progress and particularly pick up progress re pathways in terms of referring into IOM.

(2) Panel Members to forward any examples of not being able to data share and the Commissioner will take forward in his meeting with the Information Commissioner.

12. Date of the next meeting

26th April 2022 at 10:30am (hybrid meeting) The Deane House, Somerset West and Taunton Council.

(The meeting ended at 1:30pm.)