

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Police and Crime Panel** held in Committee Room 1A, County Hall, Durham on **Friday 28 October 2016 at 10.00 am**

Present:

Councillor J Allen (Chairman)

Durham County Council:

Councillors J Armstrong, D Boyes, M Dixon and P May

Darlington Borough Council:

Councillor B Jones, Mr N J H Cooke and Mr D K G Dodwell

Independent Co-opted Members:

Mr N J H Cooke and Mr D K G Dodwell

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brookes, Forster, Harker and Hopgood.

2 Substitute Members

Councillor Dixon as substitute Member for Councillor Brookes.

3 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The following updates were provided:

- Minute No. 6 - the Chief Finance Officer informed the Panel that details of the 'top sliced' funding streams relating to Counter Terrorism, Firearms and Efficiency were now known and would be circulated to Panel Members.
- Minute No. 9 - the Overview and Scrutiny Officer informed the Panel that the response from the Panel to the PCVCs Annual Report had been submitted.
- Minute No. 11 - the Overview and Scrutiny Officer informed the Panel that the Development Day for the Panel was an agenda item for today's meeting

- Minute 13 - the Overview and Scrutiny Officer informed the Panel that the Memorandum of Understanding had been updated.

5 Draft Police, Crime and Victims' Plan

The Panel considered a report of the Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner which provided the Panel with the Police, Crime and Victims' Plan 2016-21 which included amendments which had been made after the conclusion of the public consultation period (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor Allen thanked the PCVC for his comprehensive report and also to the office of the PCVC for their work during the consultation period. She informed the Panel that the online consultation was very easy to complete and suggested that Panel Members provide feedback into their communities to encourage future participation in consultation.

Councillor Jones referred to the level of consultation feedback received from Darlington which was a disappointing 12% and asked whether the PCVC would be willing to attend a meeting of the Darlington Association of Parish Councils to promote the consultation process. The PCVC replied that he would be happy to do this if details could be sent to him.

Councillor Dixon referred to police visibility and suggested that when police were in an area they should knock on doors to let people know they were there. He also referred to an app which PCSOs had which showed where they had been patrolling and suggested that this could be produced to show where they had been.

The PCVC replied that knocking on doors had been tried but had been discontinued because it was unsuccessful. However, park and walks now took place which made Neighbourhood Officers more visible to communities.

Councillor Boyes, while agreeing it was good to have objectives, asked what the impact was from receiving the feedback from the consultation. The PCVC replied that as a result of the consultation, some elements of the Plan had been changed. The benefit of the feedback was that the PCVC knew that resources were being put into the right areas when setting objectives. Each objective had three key measures against which the force would be held to account.

Councillor Armstrong informed the Panel that while he supported the problem solving approach outlined in the Plan, he considered this may be jargon for the general public. He suggested that it would be for another forum to focus on poor return rates on the consultation from some areas and to learn from good response rates from other areas.

Councillor May informed the Panel that 60% agreed with safeguarding the vulnerable, including the elderly, and asked whether other agencies, for example social services and meals on wheels could be involved to make this group feel more included. Councillor Armstrong responded that this already took place within both the Fire and Rescue Service and the Commissioner's Office. The PCVC added that his office also worked closely with Age UK.

Mr Dodwell complimented the PCVC on the draft Plan and was pleased that priorities had been identified following consultation from a wide source.

Councillor Armstrong informed the Panel that he considered the re-drafted Plan to be well compiled and easy to read.

The PCVC informed the Panel that, due to elections, the Plan had been produced later than in previous years, and asked whether feedback could be provided in time for the Plan to be launched on 7 November 2016.

Resolved:

That the report be noted and feedback be provided in time for the Plan to be launched on 7 November 2016.

6 Local Criminal Justice Review

The Panel considered a report of the Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner which provided details of progress on the review of the Local Criminal Justice Board carried out by the Office of the PCVC (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor Boyes welcomed the development of a whole system performance framework. There was a need to ensure that essential information was forthcoming from all partners to ensure the performance framework was effective. The PCVC replied that work would be co-ordinated through his office and if necessary powers could be mandated to the PCVC to ensure that partners worked together.

In response to a question from Councillor Dixon as to whether the voluntary sector would be included, the PCVC replied that it would not be because it only involved Criminal Justice agencies.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

7 Collaboration of Police and Fire Services

The Panel considered a report of the Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner which provided an update on work to enhance collaboration between the Police and the Fire and Rescue Services (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor Jones referred to the closure of the section office at Pelton Fell with co-location to High Handenhold Fire Station and informed the Panel that he did not think this had been formally decided by the Fire and Rescue Authority. The Police and Crime Commissioner replied that this had been discussed through the Joint Strategy Group.

Councillor Jones praised the success of the Community Safety Responders model but cautioned that levels of stress in these employees needed to be monitored.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

8 Delivering Change for Victims and Witnesses

The Panel considered a report of the Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner which provided an update on victim services planning and commissioning priorities (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor May cited a recent incident of burglary when police attendance had been poor. The PCVC replied that while he found the circumstances as described by Councillor May hard to understand he would investigate this further if Councillor May provided details outside of the meeting.

Councillor Allen welcomed the report and attached policy document. The area of cyber-crime was an emerging issue and the Safe Durham Partnership had been asked to look at the trend of cyber-crime and what was happening in County Durham. The PCVC informed the Panel that Durham had established a cyber-crime unit and was pushing for a regional unit.

Mr Dodwell informed the Panel that cyber-crime was never mentioned at PACT meetings and suggested that officers could be advised to raise the issue to make people more aware.

The Finance Officer informed the Panel that 300 PCs and PCSOs had been trained in the field of cyber-crime and the number of staff in the cyber-crime unit had doubled from 3 to 6.

Councillor Dixon asked whether cyber-crime included bullying through social media. The Finance Officer replied that a cyber-crime prevention officer would be visiting schools to raise such issues.

Councillor Allen informed the Panel that Durham Constabulary was being proactive in the field of cyber-crime prevention. There was no doubt that this would become a growing area of criminality and the skills and techniques used to tackle it would need to adapt.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

9 Quarter 1 Performance Report

The Panel considered a report of the Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner which provided details of the Quarter 1 2016-17 Performance Report (for copy see file of minutes).

The PCVC outlined key performance data for the headline measures of Victim Based Crime, Public Confidence, and Victim Satisfaction and performance information on each of the key areas of focus as set out in the refreshed Police and Crime Plan 2015-17.

Mr Dodwell referred to anti-social behaviour figures and asked whether if reports of such behaviour were from the same address whether these were removed from the figures. The PCVC replied that this could not be done because of the need for transparency in the figures and also the figures would more accurately reflect to the activity of police officers and PCSOs

Councillor Dixon asked whether there was an objective criteria of what anti-social behaviour was or whether tolerance levels of the population towards certain behaviours were falling. The PCVC replied that there was a description for anti-social behaviour but added there had been a general reduction in tolerance levels of the population together with a change in demographics.

Councillor Armstrong informed the Panel that he found the performance report to be very helpful.

Councillor May informed the Panel that increases in levels of crime were often as a result of fewer police officers on the street, and asked how many officers the force was recruiting.

The PCVC replied that the force could only operate within what its budget allowed and that a reduction in police officer numbers would contribute to an increase in levels of crime. Cuts to government funding and unavoidable budget pressures had resulted in the force having to cut hard and officer numbers had reduced to 950. The force was aiming to build up to 1150 officers in the short term and up to 1215 by 2018, but these figures were based on key assumptions made in the MTFP. The Finance Officer informed the Panel that the force was aiming to recruit 80 officers each year with an extra 20 to be recruited next month. Ten candidates had been interviewed as PCSO's but it was becoming increasingly difficult to recruit PCSOs because of the level of salary.

Councillor Boyes welcomed the format of the report and asked whether comparator figures were available for Durham's performance against other forces. The PCVC referred to page 120 in the agenda pack which provided comparison details to other forces for the confidence in the police, victim satisfaction and crimes per 1000 population.

Councillor Jones asked whether the force had received any funding as reimbursement for the costs of the Medomsley investigation. The Finance Officer confirmed that the force had received a Home Office grant for this.

Resolved:

That the performance report be noted.

10 Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner Decisions

The Panel considered a report of the Chief of Staff which provided an update on the Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner's decision register since the last meeting and forward plan (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor Allen referred to the appointment of a Young PCVC and reminded the Panel that an informal meeting between Members of the Panel and the Young PCVC had been arranged for 15 November 2016.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

11 Police and Crime Panel Work Programme Update

The Panel considered a report of the Director of Transformation and Partnerships, Durham County Council which provided an update on the Panel's work programme for 2016/17 (for copy see file of Minutes).

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

12 HMIC Inspection Update

The Finance Officer informed the Panel that the force had been inspected on Efficiency, Leadership and Legitimacy, although Leadership had not been scored. The results of the inspection were known but currently embargoed.