

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Police and Crime Panel** held in Darlington Borough Council, Committee Room 2, Town Hall, Darlington on **Thursday 12 March 2020 at 1.00 pm**

Present:

Councillor L Hovvels (Chair)

Durham County Council:

Councillors P Crathorne and S Quinn

Darlington Borough Council:

Councillors Heslop, J Dulston and Mills

Independent Co-opted Members:

Mr N J H Cooke and Mr D K G Dodwell

The Chair informed the meeting that an urgent item of confidential business, to appraise Panel Members of the current situation regarding Coronavirus, would be considered after the Declarations of Interest item on the agenda. Members of the public and press would be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of this update.

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Boyes, Crumbie, Jones, Nicholson, Savory and Simmons.

2 Substitute Members

Councillor Heslop as substitute Member for Councillor Crumbie and Councillor Mills and substitute Member for Councillor Jones.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2020 were conformed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

J Slee, Overview and Scrutiny Officer informed the meeting that the response of the Panel regarding precept had been sent to the Acting PCVC.

Mr Dodwell referred to paragraph 3 of the minutes and clarified that the issue was not about expenses for Co-opted Members but related to costs of attendance at, for example, conferences and events. The Governance Solicitor replied that this would be noted and added that the wider piece of work was still ongoing.

4 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Resolved:

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

COVID-19 – update

S White, Acting Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner provided the Panel with an update on preparedness of the police to respond to the current COVID-19 situation.

The Chair thanked the Acting PCVC for the update which gave reassurance to the Panel.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

The press and public were invited to rejoin the meeting.

5 Recent media activity

The Panel noted a report of the Digital Media Assistant, Office of the Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner which provided an update of press and social media activity concerning the work of the Acting PCVC since the previous meeting (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Acting PCVC informed the Panel that he had recommenced contributing columns for local newspapers.

6 Rural Update Presentation

The Panel received a presentation from J Atkinson, Office of the Acting Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner about addressing crime and community safety in rural areas (for copy of slides see file of Minutes).

The presentation covered the following:

- Overall rural crime in County Durham and Darlington
- The Acting PCVCs Rural Statement
- The issues in the area
- The use of technology to respond to rural crime
- The strategic/partnership approach

The Chair thanked Mr Atkinson for his presentation which provided an insight of the steps being taken to address the issue of rural crime.

7 Quarterly Performance Report

The Panel considered a report of the Acting Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner which provided an update on performance against the Police and Victims' Plan 2018-21 (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Chair referred to road safety and informed the meeting that the County Council was currently consulting on updating its Road Safety Strategy and encouraged all Members to participate in the consultation. A link to the consultation would be sent to all Members following the meeting.

Mr Dodwell asked whether casualty figures for the A1(M) could be segregated from those figures for the rest of County Durham and Darlington. The Acting PCVC replied that while the figures could be segregated, the A1(M) and dual carriageways were the safest roads in the County. Investment had been made for three extra road safety camera vans and the introduction of average speed cameras on the trunk road network was being considered.

Councillor Dulston referred to anti-social behaviour which was on the increase with the focus moving away from dealing with low-level anti-social behaviour, which still had an impact on communities. The Acting PCVC replied that he held the Chief Constable to account regarding anti-social behaviour and added that the force's ability to tackle low-level anti-social behaviour was better than many other places. Neighbourhood Policing Teams were being maintained at their current levels and the force was up to full numbers of PCSOs. The Acting PCVC was closely monitoring the response of the force to anti-social behaviour.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

The Acting PCVC left the meeting

8 Commissioning Update

The Panel noted a report of the Acting Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner which provided an update of key considerations considered by the Commissioning Board at its meeting held on 29 January 2020 (for copy see file of Minutes).

9 PCVC Decision Records

The Panel noted a report of the Acting Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner which provided an update on the decision register for 2020 and the forward plan (for copy see file of Minutes).