

## **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

At a Meeting of **Police and Crime Panel** held in Committee Room 1A, County Hall, Durham on **Tuesday 20 October 2015 at 10.00 am**

### **Present:**

**Councillor J Allen (Chairman)**

### **Durham County Council:**

Councillors M Dixon, S Forster, A Hopgood, P Stradling and A Willis

### **Darlington Borough Council:**

Councillors Mr N J H Cooke, Mr D K G Dodwell, S Harker (Vice-Chairman) and B Jones

### **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 Armstrong, Boyes, Brookes, Haszeldine and May.

### **2 Substitute Members**

Councillor Stradling as substitute for Councillor Armstrong, Councillor Dixon as substitute for Councillor Brookes and Councillor Willis as substitute for Councillor May.

### **3 Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **4 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The following feedback on the minutes was provided:

- the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) had provided information to Councillor Scott on the location of PCSOs in Darlington;
- the PCC had raised the issue of wine measures in pubs with the Alcohol Harm Reduction Unit
- Councillor Allen informed the Panel a Development Day for the Panel was to be held on 3 December 2015, at Police Headquarters, Durham starting at 12:30 p.m. and this would be focussed around alcohol related crime. J Slee, Overview and Scrutiny Officer added that all Panel members and substitute

members had been invited to the Development Day, with speakers including Deputy Chief Constable Steve Watson, Chief Superintendent Jane Spraggon and Miriam Davidson, Director of Public Health, Darlington.

## **5 Police and Crime Plan 2015-17 - Mid-year Update**

The Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) which provided details of progress in the achievement of policing priorities in the Police and Crime Plan 2013-2017 (for copy see file of Minutes).

The PCC provided the Panel with details of activity undertaken for each of the four activities in the Police and Crime Plan for 2015-17.

The PCC referred to the staffing numbers in the report and informed the Panel it was likely that officer numbers would reduce to 1,050 from 1,175 and police staff reduce by 130 to 775. However, due to the age profile of officers and the rate of retirements, the force had embarked on a recruitment drive to recruit 50 police officers. In reply to a question from Mr Dodwell regarding which category PCSOs fell into, the PCC replied that PCSO numbers were included in police staff. Councillor Jones asked that these be distinguished as such in future figures. The PCC informed the Panel that Durham Constabulary currently had 155 PCSOs and there were no plans to remove these from the establishment as they were a key element of Community Support Teams.

Mr Dodwell reported that his Parish Council had provided information to the police on speeding traffic which had been captured on speed guns but had been told that the evidence provided did not meet the Home Office requirements for prosecution. This was very disheartening for the Parish Council who felt that it was not getting the support of the police.

Councillor Hopgood referred to the problem of parking around schools. PCSOs currently could not issue penalty tickets for such offences, and if police officer numbers were to reduce, this parking problem could worsen. Councillor Hopgood asked whether PCSO powers could be extended to allow them to issue penalty tickets, as Neighbourhood Wardens currently had the power to issue fines.

The PCC replied that there was an ongoing national consultation on the powers of PCSOs. Work had taken place with Newton Aycliffe schools and proactive work had taken place outside of schools as part of accident harm reduction.

Referring to the issue raised by Mr Dodwell, the PCC informed the Panel he was disappointed by the response the Parish Council had received. He requested that Mr Dodwell forward the speeding data and responses to him and he would raise the matter with the force.

The PCC circulated details of the latest gradings of HMIC in the areas of effectiveness and efficiency which ranked Durham Constabulary as being outstanding in 5 out of 6 categories and good in the 6<sup>th</sup> category. The ratings showed Durham Constabulary to be the top performing Force in the country. The Force was the only one in the country to achieve a rating of outstanding in all 3

efficiency categories and this excellent performance reflected the work of officers, PCSOs and staff within the Constabulary, as well as work which took place with partners, communities and the voluntary sector.

Mr Dodwell praised the Force on this achievement and asked what publicity was being given to it. The PCC replied that a press launch had taken place on 19 October to publicise the achievement. Councillor Allen added that members of the Panel needed to ensure that news of the achievement was fed into their communities. The Chief of Staff, Office of the PCC informed the Panel that there tended to be a bias in the media towards presenting the negative rather than the positive and it was therefore important for the PCC's office, the Constabulary and Panel members to make local communities aware of this news. Banners to promote this would be placed outside of local police stations and Mr Dodwell suggested that they be displayed at PACT meetings as well.

Councillor Allen thanks the PCC for his comprehensive report which provided a good insight into work taking place. She referred to the introduction of 20 m.p.h. speed limits outside of schools and informed the Panel it was important to recognise the work of Overview and Scrutiny on this. Mr Dodwell asked whether the PCC was in discussion with Darlington Borough Council about 20 m.p.h. limits outside of schools. The PCC replied that these schemes were already in place in the Darlington Borough Council area.

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

**6 Q1 Performance Report 2015-16**

The Panel considered a report of the Chief of Staff, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner which provided a quarter 1 performance update and received a presentation of the interactive performance report which was available on the PCC's website (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor Allen praised the interactive performance capability of the PCC's website and also the performance figures which were being achieved. She asked how this information could be shared with those who did not have access to the internet.

The Chief of Staff replied that consideration was being given to distributing a hard copy of the performance figures to local libraries as well as using existing publications such as Durham County News and Darlington Together. Councillor Forster informed the Panel that libraries held information about community events and meetings and if the information was provided to the organisers of these this would help to get the information to those without internet access. Councillor Hopgood suggested that placing the information in doctors surgeries may be another method of distributing the information.

Councillor Hopgood referred to the figures for domestic abuse which were broken down between male and female victims and offenders and asked whether the figures could be broken down further, for example, by age. The PCC replied that

work to produce such a breakdown of the figures could be done and he would report back to the Panel on this.

Councillor Allen informed the Panel that she had attended a Wisedrive event at Newton Aycliffe, which targeted young people before they became drivers, and praised the multi-agency services which were involved in the event. The PCC informed the Panel that 2 fewer schools attended the event this year compared to last year. This was disappointing and the PCC asked members of the Panel to bring the event to the attention of school governing bodies may encourage greater participation. Councillor Hopgood asked that members of the Panel be provided with details of schools which had and had not attended.

Councillor Allen asked whether there had been any progress towards minimum unit pricing for alcohol. The PCC replied that all three north east PCCs had all signed up to minimum unit pricing and this was still being promoted.

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

## **7 Checkpoint Project Update**

The Panel considered a report of the Chief of Staff, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner which provided an update on the progress of the Checkpoint project (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor Allen informed the Panel that this was a new and innovative scheme and requested that further updates be brought to the Panel. She was pleased that the scheme was to undergo independent evaluation by Cambridge University and asked who completed the Crime Pic questionnaire. The Chief of Staff replied that this was a questionnaire to the offender.

Councillor Jones informed the Panel he was disappointed that assault on police officers was considered a low level crime to be included in Checkpoint. The PCC replied that this would depend upon the level of assault with Ch Supt Weir adding that research had shown the average fine imposed for assaulting a police officer was £15.

Councillor Forster informed the Panel that she was pleased with the scheme as there was often a reason or reasons for people's actions. Councillor Hopgood informed the Panel it was essential to ensure that the scheme was publicised in the correct manner to ensure the public did not see it as being an easy option.

Councillor Dixon welcomed the approach of Checkpoint and asked how easy it had been to find the appropriate service for the offender, for example for drugs and alcohol. The Chief of Staff replied that there was a comprehensive directory of service providers to be used by the Navigators and that the Navigators would feed back to the Checkpoint Governance Board if they experienced any problems finding a service provider. He was not aware of such feedback.

Mr Dodwell suggested that the rationale behind Checkpoint be explained at PACT meetings which may prevent the possibility of the programme being seen as an easy option.

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

**8 Mental Health Update**

The Panel considered a report of Supt Kevin Weir, Durham Constabulary which provided an update on the progress of mental health as a key area of focus in the Police and Crime Plan (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor Allen welcomed the update report which reflected the priority mental health was being afforded. Mr Cook informed the Panel that a common thread was that police cuts was making the job of officers more difficult and he expressed concern that cuts in other services would also have an impact around mental health work.

The PCC replied that there were vulnerable people within communities in need of support and the police worked proactively with partners to ensure everybody fulfilled their roles.

Councillor Forster informed the Panel she was pleased that officers had been trained in Neuro Linguistic Programming and some had completed Mindfulness training. Councillor Forster asked whether co-counselling took place for officer and staff dealing in this area of work and also requested that the word assessment be used rather than triage.

The PCC replied that the force was conscious of the impact the work could have on officers and staff and also cognisant of the need to support people.

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

**9 Committee for Standards in Life Report 'Tone from the top - leadership, ethics and accountability in policing'**

The Panel considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which sought agreement to a response to the report 'Tone from the top – leadership, ethics and accountability in policing' published by the Committee for Standards in Public Life (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor Allen informed the Panel that the comments within the report provided a comprehensive response, adding that the Panel was now mature and had developed a great amount of good practice.

**Resolved:**

That information within the report be used to formulate a response to the Committee for Standards in Public Life.

## **10 Update on Victims Commissioning and Funding**

The Panel considered a report of the Head of Governance and Commissioning, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, regarding the application of victims commissioning and restorative justice funds in 2015/16 and the process for the procurement of victims services in 2016/17 (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor Harker asked whether future funding was expected. The Chief of Staff, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner replied that details of funding would be known in December as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review. The new Secretary of State was keen to develop the restorative justice approach and the PCC had budget planned to ensure funding was in place for another 12 months.

### **Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

## **11 Update on Restorative Justice Activities**

The Panel considered a report of the Head of Governance and Commissioning, Office of the PCC, which provided an update on Restorative Justice activities to date and provided details of future intentions for the extension of Restorative Justice in County Durham and Darlington (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor Allen referred to paragraph 22 of the report and asked how vulnerability was assessed. The Chief of Staff replied that the needs of victims varied and characteristics of victims were assessed. In reply to a question from Councillor Forster regarding the input of the victim into the process, the PCC informed the Panel that this was a precursor to referral to the Victim Assessment Team.

### **Resolved:**

- (i) That the report be noted
- (ii) That the proposal to extend the Darlington Model across the Durham area, initially in Newton Aycliffe and Chester le Street, be supported.

## **12 PCC Decision Records**

The Panel considered a report of the Chief of Staff, Office of the PCC, which provided an update on the PCC's decision register from June to September 2015 and forward plan (for copy see file of Minutes).

### **Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

## **13 HMIC Inspections**

The Panel noted a verbal update by the Chief of Staff, Office of the PCC, which provided details of HMIC Inspections.

The Chef of Staff referred to the published PEEL Assessment results and informed the Panel that HMIC were currently in force assessing Effectiveness and Legitimacy.

#### **14 Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012**

The Panel considered a report of the Monitoring Officer which provided details of the outcome of a referral under the 'Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012 (for copy see file of Minutes).

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted and the outcome of the IPCC referral be recorded.

The Chairman was of the opinion that the following item of business was of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration because of ongoing consultation which was taking place.

#### **15 Consultation on to Role of Police and Crime Commissioners**

Mr Dodwell referred to the current consultation regarding the future roles of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC's), in particular to the Fire and Rescue service coming within the PCC's remit.

The PCC informed the Panel that he was not in favour of PCC's taking over prominence of Fire Authorities.

County Durham and Darlington currently enjoyed an excellent Fire and Rescue Authority/Fire and Rescue Service and also an excellent police service and he could see no reason to upset the balance of this by changing the role of the PCC.

The PCC acknowledged there was a need for the services to work together in greater collaboration where possible, and acknowledged that, for various reasons, this collaborative work had not progressed as quickly as it should have done in the past.

There was now a need to revitalise the programme of work around collaboration and to develop a Memorandum of Understanding between the two organisations. Officers of both his office and the Fire and Rescue Service were undertaking work on the processes needed for future collaboration to take place which should help drive forward key decisions to be made regarding savings to be made by both organisations.

The PCC informed the Panel that he would provide updates to future Panel meetings.