

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Police and Crime Panel** held in Committee Room 1A, County Hall, Durham on **Friday 30 June 2017 at 2.00 pm**

Present:

Durham County Council:

Councillors A Bainbridge, D Boyes, L Hovvels, S Quinn, S Robinson, M Simmons and H Smith

Darlington Borough Council:

Councillors M Knowles and H Scott

Independent Co-opted Members:

Mr N J H Cooke and Mr D K G Dodwell

1 Election of Chair for 2017/18

Moved by Councillor Boyes, **Seconded** by Councillor Smith and

Resolved:

That Councillor L Hovvels be elected Chairman of the Panel for the ensuing year.

Councillor L Hovvels in the Chair

Councillor Hovvels informed the Panel that Agenda Item 8 – Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/17 to 2020/21 would be considered after the Minutes to enable the Chief Finance Officer to leave the meeting.

2 Election of Vice-Chair for 2017/18

Moved by Councillor Scott, **Seconded** by Mr Dodwell and

Resolved:

That Councillor B Jones be elected Vice-Chairman of the Panel for the ensuing year.

3 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brookes, Crathorne and Jones.

4 Substitute Members

Councillor H Smith as substitute for Councillor Brookes, Councillor S Quinn as substitute for Councillor Crathorne and Councillor H Scott as substitute for Councillor Jones.

5 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

6 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

In response to a question from Mr Dodwell, Ron Hogg, PCVC confirmed that an evaluation of Operation Encompass would be brought to a future Panel meeting.

The PCVC informed the Panel of the following updates from the Minutes

- he had attended the launch of Operation ClosePass which encouraged drivers to leave a safe distance when passing cyclists.
- he had met with Ben Houchen, newly elected Mayor of the Tees Valley and had discussed ways of working together, particularly around re-offending.
- the bid for Government funding for a whole system approach to female offenders had been unsuccessful.

7 Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/17 to 2020/21

The Panel considered a report of the PCVC Chief Finance Officer which presented the Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/17 to 2020/21 for Durham PCVC and Constabulary (for copy see file of Minutes).

Mr Dodwell sought further information on the estimated 7.4% increase for Police Staff Pension contributions for 2017/18 as outlined at the financial planning assumptions on page 48. The Chief of Finance replied that this was the pension scheme for police staff which was subject to triennial reviews.

Councillor Boyes asked why police officer pay and overtime shown on page 50 showed a projected reduction in 2018/19 and 2019/20 and also asked how the pay scales for Police Officers and PCSO's in County Durham compared with other forces.

The Chief Finance Officer replied that the reduction of police officer pay referred to was due to officers, who were on the top of their pay scale retiring and new officers, who started on the bottom of the pay scale being recruited. There was an assumption of eight Bank Holidays each year, but this varied depending upon the timing of the Easter Bank Holidays, and this was the reason for the variance in the overtime figure. Police officer pay was set as a national pay scale. The salary of PCSOs in County Durham and Darlington was below the national average, less than Northumbria and the same as Cleveland.

Councillor Scott referred to the deployment of Durham officers to emergency operations in other parts of the country and asked what impact this had on the force's budget. The Chief Finance Officer replied that Durham officers had recently been deployed to Manchester following the recent terrorist attack and that forces had agreed numbers for officers in such situations. Although the officers are not backfilled, the force did get reimbursed for the costs of such deployment.

Councillor Scott informed the meeting that Durham was a very efficient and high performing force and she considered it was unfair that it was affected by Government cuts. Durham was an example to forces in the rest of the country and Councillor Scott informed the Panel that she would support the lobbying of Government.

Councillor Robinson referred to the proposed new funding formula and asked what the current position was. The Chief of Staff informed the Panel that a Home Office review had commenced in 2015 but errors were found in the proposals and the review was restarted. Proposals on the new funding formula had been expected in the spring of 2017 but the General Election had delayed this. Preparation work had been carried out to lobby if necessary and any proposed formula would be subject to a consultation period.

The PCVC informed the Panel that he appreciated the support shown. The flat cash settlement did not include pay rise pressures and pension increases and there was a need to trim and save every year to achieve a standstill position. The PCVC had concern that ongoing cuts brought increased pressures on the workforce and absence through stress was at its highest level ever in policing.

Resolved:

That the Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/17 to 2020/21 be noted.

8 Annual Report 2016-17

The Panel considered the Annual Report of the Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner for 2016-17 (for copy see file of Minutes).

The PCVC presented his report to the Panel which included key achievements, the Police Crime and Victims' Plan, highlights of 2016-17, commissioning services, resources and looking ahead to 2017-18 and beyond.

Mr Cooke referred to the Council Tax Precept figure shown on Page 17 of the Annual Report which had an error and needed to be amended. Mr Cooke also referred to 20 m.p.h. speed limits on roads which did not appear to be policed and which attracted anger from other motorists when being observed. The PCVC replied that if Mr Cooke had areas of concern regarding the 20 m.p.h. speed limits he would look at these and work with local communities.

Councillor Scott sought clarification on restorative justice and asked whether this took place after a case had been taken to court but before sentencing or before charges were made.

The Chief of Staff replied that an effective restorative conference could only take place with the agreement of both parties. Restorative approaches dealt with low level issues and all police officers were trained in restorative approaches.

Councillor Scott referred to recent public concern in Darlington about policing of the travelling community and the lack of information being fed back from the police to the public.

Councillor Hovvells informed the Panel that feedback was important, as was open communication with communities. The PCVC added that often public perception differed from reality and he would seek more information from Councillor Scott outside of the meeting.

Councillor Smith referred to the 25% increase in victim based crime during the year ended 2016/17 and asked whether this increase was due to changes in recording criteria. The PCVC confirmed that in the past there had been no obligation to record harassment, which was assault without injury, as a crime, however there was now an obligation to do so.

Resolved:

That the report be noted and that comments of the Panel be provided to the PCVC in follow-up correspondence.

9 Year End Performance Report

The Panel received a presentation from the PCVC on the Quarter 4/Year End public performance report which contained key performance data for the headline measures of victim based crime, public confidence and victim satisfaction and performance information on each aspect of the current Police, Crime and Victims' Plan.

Councillor Scott asked whether the increase in mental health related incidents, which took a massive police resource to deal with, was due to insufficient staffing in mental health crisis teams. The PCVC replied that mental health related incidents did place a massive draw on police resources but added that work had been taking place with mental health crisis teams to streamline systems so that the amount of time police officers spent waiting for services had reduced.

Mr Dodwell referred to Checkpoint and informed the PCVC that Panel members were no longer receiving updates as they previously had. The PCVC agreed to look in to this and provide members with the Checkpoint newsletter updates.

In response to a question from Councillor Scott the PCVC confirmed that he would be able to provide a breakdown for alcohol and drug related incidents and hate crime incidents by area.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

10 Police and Crime Panel Work Programme 2017/18

The Panel considered a report of the Director of Transformation and Partnerships, Durham County Council which sought agreement to the Panel's Work Programme for 2017/18 (for report see file of Minutes).

In reply to a question from Mr Cooke regarding a training event for the Panel, the Overview and Scrutiny Officer replied that an event could be arranged and further details of this would be forthcoming.

Resolved:

That the Work Programme for 2017/18 be approved.

11 Commissioning in 2016-17 and 2017-18

The Panel considered a report of the Head of Governance and Commissioning which presented the PCVC finalised 2016/17 spending position on community safety and commissioning activities and provided an update on community safety funding and commissioning activities for the financial year 2017/18 (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor Scott informed the Panel that smaller organisations had found the application form for the Community Safety Fund, which was administered by the County Durham Community Foundation (CDCF), to be complex and asked whether any discussions had taken place with the CDCF to address this. Councillor Hovvels replied that CDCF had hosted a funding workshop for community groups to start the process of bids being submitted.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

12 PCVC Decision Records

The panel considered a report of the Chief of Staff which provided an update on the PCVC decision register since the last meeting, and forward plan (for copy see file of Minutes).

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

13 HMIC Inspection Reports - Update

The Chief of Staff informed the Panel that there had been no HMIC Reports published since the last meeting.

At the close of the meeting Councillor Hovvels thanked the previous Chair and Vice Chair of the Panel for their work and also congratulated Jonathan Slee on being awarded Special Constable of the Year.