

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Police and Crime Panel** held in Meeting Room 2 - Darlington Borough Council, Town Hall, Feetham, Darlington on **Friday 10 March 2017 at 10.00 am**

Present:

Councillor J Allen (Chairman)

Durham County Council:

Councillors J Armstrong and P Brookes

Darlington Borough Council:

Councillors S Harker (Vice-Chairman) and B Jones

Independent Co-opted Members:

Mr D K G Dodwell

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Boyes, Forster, Hopgood and May and Mr N Cook.

2 Substitute Members

There were no substitute Members in attendance.

3 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer reported the following:

- a formal budget response of the Panel had been sent to the PCVC.
- more detailed information on accident statistics had been provided by the PCVC and circulated to Panel Members,

The PCVC referred to Wisedrive and informed the Panel that he was to send a letter to schools in July 2017 and this would be jointly signed by Councillor Allen. The Director of Transformation and Partnerships added that the Director of Children and Young People's Services had agreed to raise Wisedrive with schools.

The PCVC informed the Panel that he had discussed cycling issues with Councillor Brookes following the last meeting. Councillor Brookes added that the PCVC was to attend the Cycle Forum to be held in Durham in April 2017.

The PCVC referred to the cost of a fatal road traffic accident and informed the panel that this was £1.7m, not £1m as previously advised.

5 Introduction to the new Deputy Chief Constable

The PCVC introduced J Farrell, recently appointed Deputy Chief Constable to the Panel.

The Deputy Chief Constable thanked the Panel for the opportunity to attend and provided the Panel with a background to her career within the police service. She informed the Panel that since joining Durham Constabulary some 14 weeks ago she had been very impressed by the positive nature of officers who worked for the organisation and the fantastic commitment of police staff.

The Deputy Chief Constable provided the Panel with details of future challenges faced by the force, including the changing face of crime, funding challenges and the changing demographic of police officers.

The Panel thanked the Deputy Chief Constable for attending the meeting.

The Chairman informed the Panel that she intended to move Agenda Item 8 forwards to be considered next to allow the Chief Finance Officer to leave the meeting.

6 Revenue and Capital Budgets 2017/18 and Revenue and Capital Budgets 2016/17

The Panel considered a report of the PCVC Chief Finance Officer which provided details of the proposed revenue budget and policing precept for 2017/18, the proposed capital budget for 2017/18, the revised revenue and capital budgets for 2016/17 and the robustness of the estimates and adequacy of reserves (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor Allen thanked the Chief Finance Officer for the report which contained a high level of detail and information.

Councillor Brookes expressed concern that Durham force could become a victim of its own success. The Police Minister held the Durham force in high esteem and there was a danger that a view may be formed that Durham could cope with funding/budget cuts. Councillor Brookes asked whether the force sold any services as a source of income generation.

The Chief Finance Officer replied that he was pleased that Durham force had been assessed as outstanding for 3 years in a row and efficient for 2 years in a row. However, when a force was seen as being efficient there could be a thought that more efficiencies could be made, with the Government always thinking more cuts

could be made. The Durham force was now starting to see an increase in sickness levels in police officers, some of which was stress-related illness.

Mr Dodwell referred to the forthcoming election of a mayor for the Tees Valley area, which included Darlington and asked whether this would have any impact on the police budget. The Chief of Staff replied that there would be no impact on the budget.

Councillor Jones referred to the number of Band A properties in the force area which had an impact on Council Tax revenue and asked whether any progress had been made regarding representations on this issue. The PCVC replied that he had met with the Brandon Lewis, Police Minister who understood this and added that the government was taking into account the ability of a force to raise money locally when considering police funding.

Councillor Armstrong referred to top slicing of funding. The Chief Finance Officer replied top slicing of funding for the Police Transformation Fund took place and forces then had to make bids to the Fund. The PCVC added that the Transformation Fund had increased by 43% this year. Councillor Armstrong suggested that the top slicing of funding by central government should be publicised to raise awareness.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

7 Operation Encompass

The Panel received a presentation from the PCVC on Operation Encompass, a project which aimed to safeguard and support children and young people who were involved in or affected by incidents involving domestic abuse (for copy of slides see file of Minutes).

The project was a collaborative initiative which involved Durham Constabulary, Darlington Borough Council, Durham County Council and schools and academies.

Operation Encompass provided a method of sharing information between the police, local councils and schools. It enabled a designated Key Adult within the school or academy to be provided with information, explaining that a child was present in a household at the time that an incident of domestic abuse was recorded as having taken place.

The aim of Operation Encompass was to provide immediate support to a child whilst in attendance at school following an incident in the home and it was designed to reinforce safeguarding and ensure that a child's wellbeing was of paramount importance. Operation Encompass improved multi-agency sharing of information and built upon the trust that already existed between them.

In County Durham 130 schools had opted into the Operation Encompass process and this number was rising. All schools in Darlington had signed up to be part of the scheme and all Darlington schools had either attended the launch event for

Operation Encompass or had received 1-1 awareness training from the Education Safeguarding Officer.

Councillor Allen thanked the PCVC for his presentation and urged Panel Members to attend the open session training for teachers if they could to see the value of the programme.

Councillor Brookes informed the Panel that domestic violence/abuse was more prevalent than thought. He asked what the next steps would be following the sharing of information and knowledge and added that this could be a massive resource issue.

The PCVC replied that safeguarding issues placed a massive pressure on policing and that any new funding formula must include an element of non-crime demand. Encompass was to provide support to children and young people and the police would investigate and take action separately to this. The use of body-worn cameras by officers had resulted in the highest level of successful prosecutions for domestic violence incidents.

In response to a question from Councillor Jones regarding the Domestic Abuse Scrutiny Panel the PCVC reported that 11 volunteers had come forward to serve on the Panel.

Mr Dodwell informed the Panel that he was very pleased with the work of Operation Encompass which was another example of the Durham force being proactive.

Councillor Harker informed the Panel that he had attended a school governors meeting where the head teacher had reported the school had signed up to Operation Encompass and spoke highly of it.

The Panel thanked the PCVC for his presentation.

8 Quarter 3 Performance Report 2016-17

The Panel considered a report of and received a presentation from the Police, Crime and Victims Commissioner which provided a quarterly performance update for Quarter 3 2016-17 (for copy of report and presentation see file of Minutes).

Councillor Allen thanked the PCVC for breaking down the figures for cybercrime into categories, which was very useful.

Councillor Armstrong informed the Panel that he considered this to be a good performance report which highlighted some positive areas and some areas which needed to be monitored.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

9 Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner Decisions

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.

10 HMIC Inspection Report into Police Effectiveness

The Panel considered a report of the PCVC which provided information on the findings of the recent HM Inspectorate of Constabulary into Police effectiveness (for copy see file of Minutes).

The PCVC informed the Panel that Durham was the only force rated as 'outstanding' in the 2016 effectiveness inspection.

Councillor Allen passed on the congratulations of the Panel to the whole organisation of the force and praised the relationship of the PCVCs office with the force and its partnership working.

Mr Dodwell informed the Panel that the police continued to be harangued at PACT meetings and considered that this information should be circulated at PACT meetings to raise the profile of the force.

Councillor Armstrong suggested, and the Panel agreed, that the congratulations of the Panel be passed to the force on how it worked.

Resolved:

That the report be noted and a letter of congratulations be sent to the force on behalf of the Panel.

11 Conference Feedback

Mr Dodwell provided the Panel with feedback from a conference he had attended on the subject of 'Keeping Women out of Prison'

Councillor Allen thanked Mr Dodwell for his feedback.

The Chief of Staff informed the Panel that a bid had been made to Government for funding for a whole system approach to female offenders and he would keep the Panel updated on this.