

## **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

At a Meeting of **Police and Crime Panel** held in Committee Room 1B, County Hall, Durham on **Thursday 26 October 2017 at 10.00 am**

### **Present:**

**Councillor L Hovvels in the Chair**

### **Durham County Council:**

Councillors A Bainbridge, D Boyes, P Crathorne and M Simmons

### **Darlington Borough Council:**

Councillors B Jones and D Regan

### **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, Harker, Knowles and Robinson.

#### **2 Substitute Members**

Councillor D Regan as substitute for Councillor M Knowles.

#### **3 Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **4 Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **5 Police Precept 2018-19**

The Panel considered a report of the Police, Crime and Victims; Commissioner (PCVC) regarding proposals to consult on changes to the Police Precept for 2018-19 (for copy see file of Minutes).

The PCVC informed the Panel that he proposed to take a flier to the Celebration of Superheroes event in Shildon on 28 October which sought views on four different funding scenarios. The flier was at page 11 of the Agenda pack.

A formal consultation document would be brought to the Panel on 4 January 2018 and formal consultation would take place in the same way as in previous years.

The formal consultation document would make clear proposals on the back of clearer information that currently existed about the parameters for consultation.

The January consultation would include public meetings such as Area Action Partnerships, and other opportunities including in Darlington, and a survey of the general public, looking for agreement to what were likely to be firm proposals to increase the Police precept.

Councillor Boyes informed the Panel that he would be supportive of a 2% increase in precept and praised the flier in the way each of the four different funding scenarios were qualified by consequences of the scenario.

Mr Dodwell asked whether consultation would take place through 'In the Know' or Neighbourhood Watch. The PCVC replied that while he would consider this, online consultation last year had produced a variable response.

Councillor Crathorne supported the wording used in the flier which gave a brief background to police funding and presented four scenarios, with consequences of each one.

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

## **6 Durham and Cleveland Local Criminal Justice Board Update**

The Panel considered a report of the Chief of Staff, which provided an update on the work of the Local Criminal Justice Board and how this had developed during the past year. The Panel also received a presentation on the work of the LCJB (for report and slides see file of Minutes).

The PCVC informed the Panel that a lot of work had taken place over the last year, driven by the Durham office, and placed on record his thanks to the Chief of Staff and his team for their work.

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

## **7 Checkpoint Programme Update**

The Panel considered a report of the Chief of Staff which provided an update on the Checkpoint programme and how it had developed during the past year (for copy see file of Minutes).

Councillor Boyes informed the meeting that, while was pleased that the Checkpoint programme prevented criminal records for minor offences, he was concerned that the list of offences eligible for Checkpoint included assault on a police officer. Councillor Boyes also expressed concern regarding a recent press article which reported that a large scale cannabis farm had been considered appropriate for the this programme and asked how this would restore community faith on the Criminal Justice system.

The PCVC replied that the assault against the police which would be eligible for the Checkpoint programme was low-level Section 50 offences. Section 18 and Section 47 assault was a higher offence and would not be eligible for Checkpoint. He added that he was supporting a Bill currently going through Parliament to protect emergency service workers.

Referring to the press article, the PCVC informed the Panel it had given the impression that in Durham the Checkpoint programme would be used in the case of a large scale cannabis farm. The farm referred to in the article was, in fact, in Cornwall. Large scale growth of cannabis in Durham would be prosecuted unless certain criteria were met, and Durham did not give cautions for large scale growth.

Councillor Regan asked what victims' views of Checkpoint were. The PCVC replied that victims were incorporated into the Checkpoint programme at an early stage and from feedback received, victim satisfaction levels were very high.

**Resolved:**

That the update on the Checkpoint programme be noted.

**8 Quarter 1 2017/2018 Performance Report**

The Panel received a presentation from the PCVC which provided an update on the quarter one performance report for 2017/18 (for copy see file of Minutes).

The PCVC informed the Panel that there had been an increase in recorded crime in the Durham force, which was reflected in 41 of the 43 forces nationally.

Recorded crime was increasing for a number of reasons, including:

- The introduction of National Crime Recording Standards
- Improved crime reporting by Police forces
- Increased reporting of some areas of crime, for example sexual offences, because victims were more confident to report such crimes
- Increases in key areas such as theft, and there was a need to examine the causes of this
- Anti-Social Behaviour continued to decrease because of pro-activity by the force and changes in crime recording, which meant that previous ASB incidents were now crimed.
- There had been a 44% increase of Victim Based Crime, however some of this was due to crime record changes and improved systems, with the underlying increase being in the region of 16%
- Burglary had increased, but following pro-active work a decline was now being seen.

Mr Cooke referred to domestic abuse and suggested that work be undertaken with young people in school to instil what a good and a bad relationship was.

The PCVC replied that work was undertaken through various agencies, such as Show Racism the Red Card, which had an emphasis on relationships. Additionally, Durham Agency Against Crime had produced a dvd about positive relationships

which was shown in schools, and Operation Encompass provided support to children and young people who witnessed domestic abuse.

**Resolved:**

That the Quarter 1 Performance Report be noted.

**9 PCVC Decision Records**

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

**10 Recent HMIC Inspection Reports**

The Panel noted a report of the Head of Policy and Communications, Office of the Police, Crime and Victims Commissioner which gave details of recent assessments by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Chief of Staff informed the Panel that the Force had recently been inspected for Crime Data Integrity and the results of the inspection were expected in the spring of 2018.

**11 Exclusion of the Public**

**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 it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

**12 Concerning a Complaint about the Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner**

The Panel considered a report of the Monitoring Officer, Durham County Council regarding a complaint made about the Police Crime And Victims' Commissioner (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Monitoring Officer provided the Panel with background details of the complaint, the role of the Panel, relevant legislation and protocols and the PCVCs response to the complaint.

The Monitoring Officer informed the Panel that the information supplied by the complainant and the PCVCs response had been evaluated and it was recommended that the complaint be not upheld.

Members of the Panel discussed the complaint and the PCVCs response and it was:

**Resolved:**

- (i) That the matters complained of are not of sufficient seriousness to warrant referral to the IPCC.

- (ii) The complaint does not meet the Regulation 15 criteria to disapply the requirements of the Regulations and must therefore be subjected to 'informal resolution' under Regulation 28.
- (iii) That there is no substance in the complaint and/or no evidence to support it, and therefore no further action shall be taken.