

Police and Crime Panel for Lancashire

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 3rd April 2017

Present:

Chair

Councillor Alistair Bradley, Chorley Borough Council

Committee Members

Councillor Roger Berry, Wyre Borough Council
Councillor Robert Boswell, Preston City Council
Councillor Paul Elms, Ribble Valley Borough Council
Councillor Julie Gibson, Lancashire County Council
Councillor Peter Gibson, Wyre Borough Council
Councillor Brendan Hughes, Lancaster Borough Council
Councillor Andy Kay, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Councillor Adrian Lythgoe, Rossendale Borough Council
Abdul Mulla, Independent Co-opted Member

Also in attendance

- Clive Grunshaw, Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire
- Steve Freeman, Section 151 Officer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
- David Fairclough, Secretary, Lancashire Police & Crime Panel
- Phil Llewellyn, Executive and Councillor Support Manager, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair, Councillor Alistair Bradley, welcomed all present to the meeting.

Apologies had been received from Councillors Ivan Taylor, Sue Graham, Joyce Plummer, Ben Aitken, David Whipp, Terry Hill, Jacqueline Mort, Kevin Wright, Liz Oades and Altaf Baghdadi; Independent Co-opted Member.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 24th January 2017

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 24th January 2017 were agreed as a correct record.

3. Declaration of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest received.

4. Public Questions

No Public Questions had been received.

5. Appointment of Additional Independent Co-opted Member to the Police and Crime Panel

A report was submitted which confirmed the appointment of the second Independent Co-opted Member of the panel following the resignation of Paul Richardson, Independent Member. The report also recommended that the Lancashire Police & Crime Panel Arrangements be updated to provide for a substitute Independent Co-opted Member to be appointed to substitute in the event of absence of either of the two approved Independent Co-opted Members.

As reported previously, the Police and Crime Panel for Lancashire could appoint and co-opt to the Panel up to two independent persons.

The Local Government Association produced guidance on how Police and Crime Panels should go about appointing independent co-opted members, and at the previous meeting the Panel approved a selection panel to undertake the appointment in accordance with that guidance.

The selection panel had confirmed that Mr Abdul Mulla be appointed to the role for the designated 4 year term.

The selection panel also confirmed that a second candidate Ms Katie Gee was appointable.

As the Panel was aware Councils on the Panel could send substitutes for meetings in accordance with the Lancashire Police and Crime Panel Arrangements. Currently there was no provision for substitutes for the additional Independent Co-opted Members of the Panel.

It was suggested that to maintain the balance of the Panel it would be appropriate to facilitate the substitution arrangements for those occasions when one or both of the Independent Co-opted Panel Members were unable to attend meetings of the Panel.

This would require a change to the Lancashire Police & Crime Panel Arrangements, which were detailed in the report submitted.

The recent selection panel identified two appointable candidates for the one vacant Independent Co-opted Member position, and Members were advised that should the Panel approve the changes to the Lancashire Police & Crime Panel Arrangements, to facilitate substitutions by person duly appointed under the agreed selection processes, the Panel could note that Katie Gee be appointed to substitute in the event of either Altaf Bagdadi or Abdul Mulla being able to attend a meeting of the Panel.

RESOLVED – That the Panel;

- 1) Note the appointment of Mr Abdul Mulla to the second role of Independent Co-opted Panel Member;

- 2) Approve the changes to the Lancashire Police & Crime Panel Arrangements as set out in this report to provide for a substitute Independent Co-opted Member in the absence of one of the two approved Independent Co-opted Members; and
- 3) Subject to (2) above note the appointment of Katie Gee as substitute Independent Co-opted Panel Member.

6. Police and Crime Plan Monitoring Report

Members received a report which provided the Panel with an update on progress in delivering the current Police and Crime Plan (the Plan) for Lancashire 2016-2021 including a performance report in relation to the success measures contained within the Plan and a brief outline of other key commissioner activity.

The report was presented in three sections as follows:

The report attached at Appendix A contained key performance data for the headline measures: Victim Based Crime, Public Confidence, and Victim Satisfaction, and performance information on each of the key areas of focus, as set out in the Police and Crime Plan 2016-2021.

The document was updated and published publically quarterly.

The Police and Crime Plan had a number of priorities and a range of performance measures developed in conjunction with the Chief Constable that enabled the PCC to monitor both the performance of Lancashire Constabulary and the implementation of the objectives set out in the plan.

The measures were shown in full in Appendix B, with the latest performance data shown where appropriate or a short comment for measures with an outcome focus.

The Plans and Strategies were shown in Appendix C along with the lead officer responsible for delivery and progression.

In presenting his report, the Commissioner highlighted the following:

Performance

The Commissioner was concerned about the rise in crime figures outlined in the report and had requested further information.

Hate crime was an ongoing concern and work had been carried out to reassure local communities.

Children Missing from Home –The Commissioner was asking what else could be done in response to concerns re Care Homes.

PCSO's – There had been a significant reduction in support due to budgets, and this reduction remained a major concern going forward.

Fracking

Fracking was currently a major issue and a significant drain on resources, with the costs of officers being deployed to deal with demonstrations on Preston New Road predicted to be costing £450,000 a month going forwards, which was a major strain for the force. A joint letter with the Chief Constable would be sent to the Home Office and it was predicted that the threshold for financial support from the Government would be triggered.

Force Control Room

Issues were continuing with the increase in 999 calls received and the increased time required for operators to deal with the calls.

37 new recruits were in place and a peer review was due, with the National Lead for Contact Management looking at the service.

Custody Inspection 2016

The HMRC Custody Inspection had not gone as well as hoped, with three main areas of concern and thirty one areas for improvement identified.

Members of the Panel asked the Commissioner a number of questions on his report, the main issues arising and responses from the Commissioner were as follows:

Fracking

The costs of policing the demonstrations were raised and whether Cuadrilla had offered to help meet the costs. The Commissioner said that the option of being funded by a private company could not be considered as it could raise some issues about the impartiality of the police, and Steve Freeman in response to a comparison of the football clubs paying in policing, this was only within the ground and for fracking sites this would apply to policing of the site only, not the highways where the demonstrations were taking place.

In terms of the 1% threshold for reimbursements for the Government, this would be pursued and it was suggested that MP's should be approached to support the Commissioner on the back of the 10% increase in crime reported in the Commissioners report.

The merits of using officers from Greater Manchester was also discussed under Mutual Aid arrangements.

Poulton and Fylde Police Station

In response to a question on the future of the Station, the Commissioner advised that there were no plans to close it, or any other across Lancashire, although all would be reviewed, with any implications reported to the Panel.

Domestic Abuse

A recent court case was referred to which would not have encouraged victims of Domestic Abuse to come forward.

Crime Figures

Members of the Panel questioned the Commissioner on the statistics in his report, and the Chair noted that national comparisons or benchmarking information would be useful for future reports.

Public Confidence in the Police

The decrease in public confidence was referred to (August 2015 90.9%, March 2017 80.7%) and it was suggested that this should be a priority for the new Chief Constable. In response the Commissioner advised that public satisfaction was a more tangible indicator as it related to people who had contact with the Police, whereas public confidence was more a point of view. The Commissioner felt that the main issue related to lack of feedback for the Police, people didn't know what had happened:- this was a training need for officers and had been discussed at Scrutiny meetings, and needed to be part of core policing.

Estates

The Commissioner clarified the land transaction between Myerscough College and Police Headquarters at Hutton, which was aimed at best use of the site.

Harassment

In relation to 2000 incidents reported the Commissioner was asked about the types of harassment, and he agreed to provide this information to the Panel.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

7. Police and Crime Commissioner Decisions

The Panel received a report which highlighted decisions made by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire, and the Director, under delegated authority in the period since the last meeting of the Panel on the 23rd January 2017.

In relation to the Social Value Policy, it was suggested that in terms of giving priority to Local businesses when bidding for contracts it was important to note an 'aspiration' to go with local builders although it was noted that this would not always be possible.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

8. Recruitment of Chief Constable Update

A report was submitted which provided an update on the recruitment process for the appointment of the Chief Constable for Lancashire Police following the end of term for Steve Finnigan. Following the Confirmation Hearing on 20th March 2017 Mr Andrew Rhodes was confirmed as the new Chief Constable for Lancashire, upon the retirement of Steve Finnigan.

The Panel made reference to the excellent service provided by the Steve Finnigan to the people of Lancashire.

Reference was also made to the impressive responses provided by Andy Rhodes at the Confirmation Hearing.

RESOLVED –

1. That the report be noted; and
2. That the thanks of the Panel be placed and recorded for the excellent service provided by Steve Finnigan to the people of Lancashire.

9. Victim Services Task and Finish Group – Verbal Update

Councillor Roger Berry verbally reported on the work undertaken by the Task and Finish Group to scrutinise Victim Services in Lancashire as follows;

- Work undertaken was carried out before the full extent of the new Victims Service and it's provider were disclosed, and the work of the Group had now been overtaken by events
- Around 4,000 people were requested to the service each year, with 10,000 receiving enhanced 1-1 support, and 4,000 identified as vulnerable.
- Numbers of victims were increasing each quarter.
- Young victims were now within the scope of the service.
- The PCC met with service providers on a quarterly basis to review performance indicators.
- The Group saw an independent consultation document which indicated high levels of satisfaction amongst victims using the service.
- The document referred to also highlighted that some victims may not be inclined to use the service if introduced by the Police. The importance of support throughout the court process was also stressed
- The report referred to highlighted inconsistencies in quality and satisfaction because of the number of agencies involved, and had recommended development of a county-wide multi-disciplinary one stop shop, and it was now hoped that the new contact would deliver this recommendation.

Councillor Berry thanked the staff who had helped brief the Panel and support the work undertaken and suggested that given the historical picture, it was important that the new service be scrutinised.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the report be noted; and
- 2) That Scrutiny of Victim Services be added to the Forward Plan for 2017/18

10. Task and Finish Group – Frontline Policing

A report was submitted on the need to recommence scrutiny of Frontline Policing, following earlier scrutiny of this topic.

Councillor Paul Elms volunteered to sit on the Panel.

RESOLVED – That following confirmation of membership following elections, that this matter be considered at the AGM meeting in June and membership confirmed.

11. Potential Formation of Association of Police and Crime Panels

Councillor Paul Elms and Phil Llewellyn reported on the potential formation of an Association of Police and Crime Panels.

A meeting was held at Grant Thornton's Offices in London on the 17th February 2017 to discuss the potential formation of an Association of Police and Crime Panels. The invitation was to Chairs of Panels and to supporting officers,

The Chair agreed that the Vice Chair, Paul Elms would attend the meeting to represent the Lancashire Police and Crime Panel, along with Phil Llewellyn from the host authority on behalf of the Secretary.

The meeting was very well attended by 37 members and officers from 25 PCPs. The meeting was convened and facilitated by Frontline Consulting.

A note of the meeting was attached at Appendix A.

The main identified benefits of an Association were suggested to be the ability to collaborate, lobby and network. It was noted that a number of regional networks exist, but currently there was no network for the Lancashire panel to work with.

It was agreed that a steering group be set up to further scope out the potential for an Association and that proposals would be submitted to all PCPs, who would then be invited to respond to the proposals.

Clearly the benefits of joining an Association would need to be demonstrable with cost and resource implications fully identified, alongside other more regional working options.

The LGA had offered to set up a Special Interest Group and a meeting would be held in July, and Councillor Elms suggested that after Phil and he had attended the meeting they report back on the merits of the proposal, but in the meantime it was appropriate to keep a watching brief on developments and not commit to the proposals, financially or otherwise.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted and that no commitment be made at the present time in terms of joining a potential Association, and that instead, a watching brief be observed pending further clarity about the proposed and potential benefits that would need to be clearly demonstrated.

12. Monitoring of Complaints

A report was submitted which set out the current position with regard to communications relating to potential complaints received to date in relation to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Many communications received focussed on the alleged conduct of police officers or the chief constable, and these were matters for which there were other complaints processes. There had been 3 further communications of this nature recently and the potential complainants had been advised of the appropriate complaint processes. A fourth communication was more of a statement relating to the adoption of the Precept and the value of the PCC role and was not therefore registered as a complaint.

No formal complaints registerable under the Regulations (Approved Procedure) had been received since the last meeting. Such Complaints would always be reported after receipt, at the next available Panel meeting.

RESOLVED – That the update in relation to communications and complaints be noted.

13. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

14. Date of Next Meeting

The Panel were advised that the Commissioner would be on holiday on the 5th June, which was the scheduled date for the AGM, and to help better align with Scrutiny it was suggested the meeting be moved to the 19th June, and that the Chief Constable be invited to attend the AGM each year.

The Chair also advised that he would invite Leaders to encourage attendance at meetings and appoint substitutes who could be trained and available to attend.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the AGM be held on 19th June; and
- 2) That the incoming Chief Constable Andy Rhodes be invited to attend, and that this would be an annual invitation for each AGM.

SignedChair
2017

