

Police and Crime Panel for Lancashire

Minutes of the Annual General meeting held Monday 4th July 2022

Present:

Chair

Councillor Jackie Oakes, Rossendale Borough Council

Committee Members

Councillor Alistair Bradley, Chorley Borough Council
Councillor Simon Hore, Ribble Valley Borough Council
Councillor Quesir Mahmood, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Councillor James Flannery, South Ribble Borough Council
Councillor Gordon Johnson, West Lancs Borough Council
Councillor Ged Mirfin, Lancashire County Council
Councillor Peter Hunter, Blackpool Council
Councillor Mark Townsend, Burnley Borough Council
Councillor Ash Sutcliffe, Pendle Borough Council
Councillor Peter Edwards, Hyndburn Borough Council
Councillor Robert Boswell, Preston City Council
Councillor Roger Berry, Wyre Borough Council
Councillor Sandra Thornberry, Lancaster City Council

Observers: Councillor Peter Le-Marinel, Wyre Borough Council, Jan Alcock, Ribble Valley Borough Council.

Also in attendance

- Andrew Snowden, Police and Crime Commissioner
- Andrew Pratt, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner
- Angela Harrison, Office of the PCC
- Ian Dickinson, Office of the PCC
- Asad Laher, Secretary
- Phil Llewellyn, Corporate and Democratic Lead
- Nathan Richards, Graduate Trainee

1. Appointment of Chair 2022/23

The Secretary of the Panel, Asad Laher, welcomed all to the meeting and announced the next item of business, which was the Appointment of Chair for 2022/23.

The Secretary requested nominations for Chair of the Panel for 2022/23, Councillor Alistair Bradley nominated Councillor Jackie Oakes, which was seconded by

Councillor Roger Berry. No other nominations were received. Councillor Oakes made a statement, outlining her suitability for the role.

RESOLVED – That Councillor Jackie Oakes be appointed Chair of the Panel for 2022/23.

(Councillor Jackie Oakes in the Chair).

2. Appointment of Deputy Chairman

The Chair requested nominations for Deputy Chair of the Panel for 2022/23 and nominated Councillor Roger Berry, which was seconded by Councillor Simon Hore. No other nominations were received. Councillor Berry made a statement outlining his suitability for the role.

RESOLVED - That Councillor Roger Berry be appointed Deputy Chair of the Panel for 2022/23.

3. Membership Review 2022/23

The Secretary presented a report which advised that the Lancashire Police & Crime Panel consisted of 15 Elected Members, one from each local authority and 2 co-opted Independent Members (non-political). In addition, up to 3 other Elected Members could be co-opted in order to achieve the 'balanced appointment objective' (as far as reasonably practicable), and best represented the overall political make up of all the 15 local authorities in the police area. There was also a requirement for the membership to have skills, knowledge and experience necessary for it to discharge its functions effectively.

In accordance with the legislation and available guidance, the political balance of the Panel been determined from an overall calculation based on the current political composition of all 15 local authorities in the police force area. For the purposes of the political balance calculations, the 'minor' political groups from all the 15 local authorities had been grouped together as 'Other' and similarly, all the 'Independent' elected Members from the 15 local authorities had been being grouped together. The Panel's Arrangements enabled additional elected members to be co-opted to achieve the 'balanced appointment objective', provided the total membership did not exceed 20. Based on the information provided by the 15 local authorities, the overall political composition for the police area was:

Con	40.58%
Lab	39.47%
Lib	5.96%
Ind	5.40%
Other	5.82%
Green	2.77%

Total	100%
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This represented the following composition for a politically balanced Panel of 15 elected member seats:

Lab	6
Con	6
Lib Dem	1
Ind	1
Other	1

The Panel was also due to appoint 2 Independent Co-opted Members, who were not elected representatives to serve on the Panel. These seats were currently vacant and a recruitment process was underway.

The nominations received from the 15 local authorities for the 2022/23 Panel membership of 15 elected members was:

Lab - 8
Con - 6
Other (Our West Lancashire) - 1

In light of this and in accordance with guidance, the 15 local authorities (via their Leaders) were invited to review/change their nominations in order to correlate closely with the politically balanced composition, as detailed above (and achieve the 'balanced appointment objective'). To date, no confirmation had been received.

The next step therefore was to co-opt additional elected members up to the maximum of 18 elected members, in order to address the 'balanced appointment objective' (as far as reasonably practicable). This had previously been agreed by the Panel to consider, and closely align the composition of the Panel with the overall political composition of the police force area. The additional 3 seats proposed and the names of those proposed additional elected members required the unanimous agreement of the 15 elected core membership (i.e. those nominated by the 15 local authorities). This would be subject to notification and approval of the Home Office, with an explanation of the reasoning for their appointments.

On the basis that 15 local authorities' nominations remain unchanged, and applying the 3 co-opted additional elected member seats the full composition of the 2022/23 membership for the Panel would be as follows:

Lab - 8 (as nominated)
Con - 8 (i.e. 6 as nominated + 2 co-opted additional elected member seats)
Lib Dem - 1 (i.e. 1 co-opted additional elected member seat)
Other - 1 (as nominated)

Independent co-opted (non –political) - 2

Total – 20 seats (maximum).

Therefore, 2 co-opted additional seats could be allocated to the Conservative group and 1 co-opted additional seat could be allocated to the Liberal Democrat group to achieve the 'balanced appointment objective' (as far as reasonably practicable).

Balancing the geographical, political make-up of the 15 local authorities, and the skills and experience needed for the Panel to discharge its functions effectively, the following 3 co-opted additional elected members were suggested to the Panel:

1. Wyre Borough Council - a Conservative co-opted additional member from this area of the police force would assist towards achieving a more balanced Panel. The Council had confirmed Councillor Peter Le Marinell as their co-opted additional member, who has previously served the Panel and has the skills and experience.
2. South Ribble Borough Council - a Conservative co-opted additional member from the central Lancashire area would also provide better representation on the Panel.
3. Pendle Borough Council – a Liberal Democrat co-opted additional member from the east Lancashire area would again assist to achieve a more balanced Panel. The Council had confirmed Councillor David Whipp as their substitute, who has also previously served on the Panel and had the skills and experience.

It was advised that the Local Authorities combined must 'agree' to the composition of the Panel and that the Home Office had powers to intervene and make appointments if agreement could not be reached locally, however, it had been made clear that the best Panel arrangements were those which were locally determined.

The Panel then debated the report and best way forward to agree the Panel Membership for 2022/23.

Councillor Ged Mirfin indicated that it did not feel this was a representative process, and that there would be better ways to achieve political balance, suggesting that a working party be set up to look at the matter, and other models could be looked at such as the Fire Authority, and also suggested increasing the size of the Panel to help achieve a better balance. In response to this, the Secretary advised that under the legislation the size of the Panel could not exceed 20 Members, including the two co-opted member places.

Councillor Hore advised that he felt Ribble Valley should maintain its second Member on the Panel and would be disappointed if it was not the case.

In reference to the suggested Liberal Democratic place, Councillor Sutcliffe advised that his Council had not nominated Councillor David Whipp as its second representative, and that if an additional Liberal Democratic place was agreed and requested it would be up to the Council who that was. The Secretary advised that currently, Councillor Whipp had been nominated as a substitute Member on the Panel.

Councillor Bradley advised that the complex political and geographical nature of Lancashire could never be truly reflected in a Panel made up of 20 Members, and that the proposal in the report was good as it could be, in terms of politics and place, and

that he was happy to support and move the proposals in the report, this was seconded by Councillor Jackie Oakes.

There then followed a vote on the recommendations in the report, which was not unanimous, and the Secretary advised that a vote needed to be unanimous on this matter.

The Panel further discussed the matter, with Councillor Mirfin suggesting that the number or percentage of seats at last election be looked at, Councillor Berry advising that the right people needed to be involved in the Panel, who could effectively contribute to its work, such as Councillor Peter Le-Marinel, and Councillor Sutcliffe suggested indicating that he did not vote in favour of the recommendations because of the named Liberal Democrat proposal, but that he would be happier to support a Liberal Democratic Member from elsewhere.

Councillor Alistair Bradley, noting a similar position in a previous year, suggested Members vote in favour of the recommendations with the caveat that the reservations of the Councillors be noted in the minutes to reflect that although a unanimous vote was required, it was achieved only with reservations.

There then followed a vote on this basis and the Panel voted in favour of the recommendations.

RESOLVED – That the Panel:

1. Confirm the Panel Membership for 2022/2023 as 15 core Elected Members (plus 2 co-opted Independent Members) plus agree, subject to Home Office approval 3 additional co-opted elected members as set out in this report, to achieve the ‘balanced appointment objective’ (as far as reasonably practicable) with reservations as referred to in the minute above.
2. Subject to 1 above, to note that the Secretary will notify the Home Office of the 3 additional co-opted elected members and the reasons how their appointments would assist in meeting the ‘balanced appointment objective’.
3. Note the Panel’s governance arrangements as published on the Host Authority’s website (contained in the report).

4. Host Authority and Secretary to the Panel

RESOLVED – That Blackburn with Darwen continue as Host Authority for 2022-23, and that Asad Laher be continue as Secretary to the Panel for 2022-23.

5. Apologies

It was noted that Councillor Tommy Threlfall had been unable to attend the meeting.

6. Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED - The Minutes of the meeting held on 7th March 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

7. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Mirfin and Sutcliffe referred to their scrutiny roles on a Sub-Committee at Lancashire County Council that scrutinised areas under the remit of the PCC.

8. Public Questions

No public questions had been received.

9. PCC Update Report

The Commissioner submitted a report which provided Members of the Panel with an update on progress in developing the Police and Crime Plan for 2021-2025 and also highlighted some of the activity of the PCC and his Office. The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner also updated the Panel on recent activities and initiatives he was leading on.

Members of the Panel asked a number of questions and made comments in particular on:

- The accuracy of data for the Force, in the light of the issues at the Met.
- Progress of the survey on Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and how this feed back into the ASB unit
- Approval of the focus on recruitment of school leavers and opportunities for people to seek alternatives to University
- Data analytics
- Reported increases in Sexual Assaults and Rape – charges and convictions
- ASB at food outlets and supermarkets
- Policing of football games involving local teams
- Retention and recruitment of police officers and staff and impact on 999 calls

The Commissioner responded to the questions and comments, advising that the data integrity for Lancashire Constabulary was very high (98%) and if anything the Force was over-zealous in reporting. The survey on ASB was ongoing and would inform the response to ASB and outlined the ongoing activity. The Commissioner was leading nationally for PCCs on Technology and Digital, and was looking at national data, as

well as local data, technology and contracts management was being looked at as was data robotics, and was working with Community Safety Partnerships on the sharing of data.

In terms of Sexual Assaults and Rape – the Commissioner reported on the ongoing back log of cases post Covid and noted that victims had to consent to prosecution. Dedicated Rape and Sexual Assault Teams were working with victims and the CPS, with the CPS match funding the investment made into these dedicated teams. The PCC and APCC also outlined new performance indicators and ongoing work with partners to help increase successful prosecutions, and work with agencies to focus on the night time economy and with those working with families affected by issues of domestic violence.

The PCC outlined work with fast food outlets and supermarkets on controlled use of wi-fi and sensible product placement in helping manage issues of loitering, theft and ASB. The Commissioner also acknowledged recent issues with the policing of some games involving local derby matches and ongoing work with clubs and supporters groups.

Finally, the PCC advised that in terms of recruitment and retention, the Force was ahead of target in terms of Police Officers, but the recruitment and retention of support staff was problematic, as were sickness rates at the contact centre, and also staff were being attracted to other jobs in the private sector such as in IT and Estates.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

10. PCC Decisions

A report was submitted on decisions made by the PCC or Director, or authorised officer, under delegated authority in the period since the last meeting of the Panel on 7th March 2022.

Members of the Panel asked questions relating to how the effectiveness of grants were reviewed and also in terms of Section 22a collaboration in relation to Modern Slavery and Organised Crime Programme, who was being collaborated with.

The PCC advised that grants effectiveness was achieved via stringent criteria, effective grant management and funding interactions that would make a difference. In terms of Section 22a collaboration, the Commissioner advised that this was with other forces, the National Crime Agency, cross sector working and the movement of resources.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

11. Task and Finish Groups 2021/22 Feedback and Updates

Councillor Roger Berry updated the Panel on the work of the Task Group, looking at the 101 Service, and advised that a report with recommendations would be submitted to the next meeting in September.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the two Task and Finish Groups for 2022/23 would focus on the work of:

- DRSA Teams – violence against Women and Girls
- £700k Rural Crime Team Funding

Councillor Mirfin agreed to Chair the Rural Crime Group, with Councillor Gordon Johnson volunteering to join the Group, along with Councillor Simon Hore.

Councillor Mark Townsend agreed to Chair the Group looking at the DRSA Teams response to violence against Women and Girls, with Councillor Sandra Thornberry volunteering to join the Group, and Councillor James Flannery hopeful; he would be able to join the Group.

Phil Llewellyn outlined the officer support available and indicated that meetings could be held virtually as well as site meetings as appropriate. The Commissioner also offered support for both groups.

The Forward Plan for 2022/23 would be discussed at the next meeting.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted and Task and Finish Groups for 2022/23 be agreed.

12. Budget Statement 2021/22

A report was submitted which outlined Panel expenditure to date in 2021/22, containing a breakdown of projected costs and expenditure as submitted to the Home Office in early March for the Grant Claim for 2020/21, with the final outturn to be submitted towards the end of July which would reflect Allowances payments to the Chair, and Vice Chair of the Panel and Task & Finish Group Leads and Task and Finish Group Members for 2021/22.

RESOLVED – That the expenditure for 2021/22 be noted and that the report and breakdown be published on the PCP Website.

13. Monitoring of Complaints

Members received a verbal update from the Secretary, advising that one potential complaint had been received since the last meeting, but that this related to an operational matter and was not within the remit of the Panel.

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

14. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

Angela Harrison and Asad Laher clarified the positions in terms of potential Declarations of Interest as raised earlier in the meeting by Councillors Mirfin and Sutcliffe, noting the scrutiny aspect, but also clarifying that whilst LCC could request attendance by the PCC, that only the PCP actually officially scrutinised the Commissioner.

19. Date of next meeting

The Panel noted the meeting dates and times for the remainder of 2022/23 and also the acoustics of the room were noted in terms of the Council Chamber, and it was hoped that once the necessary audio-visual equipment was in place that meetings could be held in the smaller Meeting Room A at Blackburn Town Hall.

Signed.....Chair
2022