

POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Meeting to be held on 6th March 2023

Police & Crime Commissioner's update

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Panel with an update on progress in developing the current Police and Crime Plan (the Plan) for Lancashire 2021-2025.

This report also aims to highlight some of activity of the PCC/Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is asked to consider the report.

Background

1. The Police and Crime Commissioner has a responsibility to hold the Chief Constable to account for the Constabulary's performance as against the Police and Crime Plan priorities by means of the Accountability Board meeting.
2. This link <https://www.lancashire-pcc.gov.uk/transparency/meetings-reports/accountability-board-meeting/> details of the Accountability Board papers received from the Chief Constable and the Minutes of the meeting records the PCC holding the Chief Constable to account.
3. The Panel are therefore referred to the Accountability Board meetings and may through today's meeting ask the Police and Crime Commissioner issues they feel relevant to the Scrutiny activity.

Performance Headlines

4. On 15 February 2023, the Commissioner held his Accountability Board meeting with the Chief Constable. The Commissioner received an update on the Constabulary's performance against the Police and Crime Plan priorities, the work of the Professional Standards Department and set the policing budget for 2023/24.

Key issues discussed included:

- All crime across Lancashire is down by almost 8% below pre-pandemic levels, according to the latest data presented at the meeting.

- Discussion around Op Defender, which is targeting burglary and robbery with prolific offenders a key focus.
 - Op Warrior which is seeing results in the fight against organised crime
 - the ongoing battle against anti-social behaviour, including the recent ASB summits across Lancashire
5. On 21st February, the Commissioner also held an extraordinary Accountability Board in relation to the handling of the widely publicised missing from home investigation into Nicola Bulley.
 6. The Panel will by now be aware through the media that he has commissioned the College of Policing to undertake a full independent review, of the case which will run alongside the independent scrutiny that will come from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) and the Coronial process.
 7. Following receipt of the panel's formal response to the Commissioner's proposals in relation to the council tax precept, the Commissioner has now approved his policing budget for 2023/24. The Commissioner would like to place on record his thanks to the panel for their scrutiny of his proposals and their approval.
 8. In November the Commissioner, alongside Lancashire Constabulary, launched Op Warrior, a force wide operation delivering on his Fighting Crime Plan priority of disrupting and dismantling organised crime.
 9. Operation Warrior targets both individuals and gangs involved in crime, as well as associated issues such as violence and intimidation, large scale drug supply, exploitation and fraud, all of which can cause serious harm to local communities. Since the launch officers have made 277 arrests leading to 88 charges and secured 60 years in jail time for organised crime gang members.
 10. As the panel will be aware, the Commissioner has announced that he is in the process of purchasing Runshaw College's former Chorley campus to develop into a new policing base. This will serve communities across Chorley, replacing the existing dated station which has been deemed not fit for purpose.
 11. The new base will be used by Lancashire Police to house Chorley's response and neighbourhood policing teams, the area's Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and other specialist teams including one of the newly launched Rape and Sexual Offences Teams.
 12. It is also intended to be used as a new training campus for the Constabulary as part of the ongoing major recruitment drives into policing – but also as a major investment into the Commissioner and Chief Constable's vision for Lancashire to be an internationally-excellent training force, delivering first-class police officers to keep our county safe.

13. In December, the Commissioner brought together senior leaders from across Lancashire to coordinate how violence against women and girls (VAWG) is tackled across the county.
14. The leadership summit gave organisations across Lancashire, including Police, councils and the NHS the opportunity to come together to discuss the vital role they play in tackling VAWG and to identify any gaps in service provision and how they can better work together to develop a consistent and proactive approach to combat VAWG and importantly create wrap-around support for victims across the county.
15. From this event, the Commissioner and his Office are in the process of establishing a VAWG Strategic Board that will create a forum for organisations across Lancashire to discuss the partnership response to Violence Against Women and Girls, the key focuses within this will be reducing the prevalence of VAWG crimes, improving support for victims and bringing perpetrators to justice.
16. The Commissioner has been appointed as the new Chair of the North West Cyber Resilience Centre's Guidance Council (NWCRC). The Guidance Council oversees the work of the Cyber Resilience Centre and is made up of representatives from across policing, the private and public sectors and academia.
17. By working with the NWCRC to support organisations in Lancashire as well as other areas in the region, the Commissioner will work to make life harder for offenders and prevent new victims.
18. As the Panel are aware, the Commissioner has announced his plans to invest in Lancashire Police's Headquarters at Hutton, around the critical police infrastructure which supports dogs and mounted branch, specialist and technical training, fleet maintenance, cyber and crime teams, contact management and other enabling services.
19. The proposals are part of his ten-year plan to invest in critical infrastructure and deliver a more efficient and fit for purpose estate in line with Chief Constable Chris Rowley's operational requirements to improve policing to our communities.
20. During the festive period, the Commissioner invested in additional policing over the festive period, to help those celebrating across the county stay safe.
21. This activity was funded through the Police Commissioner's Safer Lancashire Neighbourhoods Fund, which uses money seized from criminals and invested back into fighting and deterring crime.

22. In a similar vein the Commissioner has thanked the county's police officers and staff for their work during the festive period, with the force answering 7,668 emergency calls for service in total between Christmas Eve and New Year's Day. There were also 620 arrests between 24th December 2022 and 1st January 2023 and 181 over New Year's Eve.
23. The Commissioner has written to the Home Secretary urging her to get tough on youth justice and to improve domestic abuse charging processes, as he outlined the challenges faced in Lancashire in the fight against crime. In his letter, the Commissioner also praised the recent change in policy by the Home Secretary to end degree only entry for police officers
24. Through January the Commissioner held three ASB summits, in each policing division. 175 delegates from local agencies including the Police, Local Authority, Education, housing associations and local MPs heard from the Commissioner, the Chief Constable and the Divisional Commanders to understand local policing issues and Rebecca Bryant, Resolve Chief Executive provide a national overview and update on the governments ASB principles.
25. Attendees were asked to commit to further strengthening relationships, recognising the importance of their organisations in tackling anti-social behaviour issues and the fact that policing is only one part of solving ASB problems – with everything from strengthening youth justice consequences through to adequate youth provision needed.
26. The Commissioner has invited Michael Gove MP to Lancashire to discuss the blight of anti-social behaviour and how to make communities safer, following reports the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities will be leading a Government ASB taskforce.
27. Deputy PCC Andy Pratt MBE visited Fleetwood to discuss the work of local teams in the area, during Neighbourhood Policing Week. He heard how, in the six months prior in Fleetwood and the wider Wyre area, there had been 20 warrants targeting criminal gangs and disrupting drugs gangs, with over £90k in cash seized alongside other assets and proceeds of crime.
28. The Commissioner met with the North Western Chamber of Commerce alongside Chief Superintendent Stasia Osiowy to discuss business crime and concerns surrounding the local area and how owners can work together with police to combat criminal damage.
29. The Commissioner has joined South Division Neighbourhood Policing Teams on the beat in Chorley to see how issues around ASB are being addressed in the area.
30. During the visit, which took place during Neighbourhood Policing Week, the Commissioner saw first-hand how the neighbourhood team was getting tough on ASB and those who commit it, including the use of dispersal orders.

31. Finally, the Commissioner has been visiting organisations throughout Lancashire that received funding through his successful bid to the Ministry of Justice. These include Paladin, The Wish Centre, Humraaz and the Emily Davison Centre all who do vital work with victims across Lancashire.

Recommendation

32. Panel Members are recommended to consider the information contained in this report, and the information provided within the meeting, and comment accordingly.