

Police and Crime Panel for Lancashire

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 6th March 2023

Present:

Chair

Councillor Jackie Oakes, Rossendale Borough Council

Committee Members

Councillor Roger Berry, Wyre Borough Council
Councillor Peter Le-Marinel, Wyre Borough Council
Councillor Jonathan Saksena, Preston City Council
Councillor Jan Alcock, Ribble Valley Borough Council
Councillor Sandra Thornberry, Lancaster City Council
Councillor Qesir Mahmood, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Councillor Peter Hunter, Blackpool Borough Council
Councillor Mark Townsend, Burnley Borough Council
Councillor Alistair Bradley, Chorley Borough Council
Councillor Ash Sutcliffe, Pendle Borough Council
Councillor David Whipp, Pendle Borough Council
Richard Glover, Co-Opted Independent Member

Also in attendance

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

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Councillors Mirfin, Edwards, Threlfall, Flannery, Johnson and Walton.

2. Minutes

RESOLVED – The Minutes of the Meetings held 5th December 2022 and 1st February 2023 be agreed as a correct record.

Under Matters Arising from the December Meeting, the PCC advised that reports could be provided as requested in respect of work being done to help reduce the backlog in the Courts System through PCC involvement in the Lancashire Justice Board and also on road casualty data use and consistency, but he also asked the DPCC to update the meeting on these two areas.

Andrew Pratt then provided an update on progress so far in the approach to reducing the backlog in the Courts System, which was discussed by the Panel, who particularly commented on the need for the impact on victims to be fully addressed and also shared some information on road casualty data which was available on the Lancashire County Council website, with Panel Members welcoming the information, but requesting more timely data, as the information presented was around a year old.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest submitted.

4. Public Questions

No Public Questions were received.

5. Performance Update

The PCC provided Members of the Panel with an update on progress in the delivering the current Police and Crime Plan (the Plan) for Lancashire 2021-2025, as well as highlighting some of the activity of the PCC/Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

In particular, the Commissioner updated the Panel on the recent Nicola Bulley case, which had been widely publicised, and the PCC had commissioned the College of Policing to undertake a full independent review of the case, which would run alongside independent scrutiny by the Information Commissioners Office, the Independent Office for Police Conduct and the Coronial Process.

Members of the Panel made comments on the Nicola Bulley case, particularly the media and social media aspects, which had hindered the search and continued to affect the family as well as local residents, with the Commissioner advising that he and his family had also been affected by intrusions by the Daily Mail, and confirming that the handling of communications and media engagement would be covered by the independent investigation as well as social media aspects.

Members of the Panel asked questions of the Commissioner and made comments relating to the report and performance data, with the PCC advising:

- Work was underway to co-ordinate the approach taken to tackle violence against women and girls, and in response to a question on any particular gaps, the PCC advised that Housing needed to be focussed on as part of the approach, to address the issue where domestic abuse was occurring, but people were still dependant on their partner.
- Drink/Drug Driving – increasing numbers of people were being tested for drug driving and the message needed to get out that people should not drive under the influence of drink or drugs, but that in terms of drugs, this was now easier to test and increased convictions would result.
- Non-emergency 101 calls – Councillor David Whipp commented on the figures and the high number of abandoned calls and the triage process, which he felt was indicative of a systemtic approach to supress reporting. In

response, the PCC advised that some of these calls were not 101 calls, ie. they were people making contact for progress updates etc, but advised that appropriate technology was being looked into to help people report crime, whilst agreeing that ASB was under reported, which was a national issue.

- The Commissioner outlined funding for cross border policing/county lines crimes and the approach to target hardening for areas.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

6. PCC Decisions

A report was submitted highlighting decisions made by the PCC or his officers, since the Panel Meeting on 5th December 2022.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

7. Task and Finish Groups – Update

It was reported that both the Task and Finish Groups would be meeting in March with the Rural Crime Group meeting the following day via Teams with Lorraine Elwood from Lancashire Police who was leading on Rural Crime. This would give the group information to see how this accorded with the priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan and formulate questions to put to the Commissioner as appropriate.

The Task and Finish Group looking at Domestic Violence and Violence against Women and Girls would be meeting with both Victim Support and the Police in March before talking to the Commissioner again on their findings. Final reports and recommendations would be submitted to the Panel at the Annual General Meeting.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

8. Timetable of Meetings 2023/24

The Panel received the proposed Timetable of Meetings for 2023/24.

RESOLVED: That the Timetable of Meetings for 2023/24 be as approved as follows:

DATE/TIME/VENUE
Monday 3rd July 2023 –AGM & Annual Induction Session – Blackburn Town Hall 10am, followed by Annual Induction after lunch.
Tuesday 3rd October 2023 – Blackburn Town Hall 4pm.

Monday 4th December 2023 - Blackburn Town Hall 4pm.
Wednesday 31st January 2024 (Precept only) – Blackburn Town Hall 4pm.
Wednesday 15th February 2024 (if required –dependant on Precept decision) Blackburn Town Hall 4pm.
Monday 4th March 2024 – Blackburn Town Hall 4pm.
Monday 1st July 2024 – AGM & Annual Induction Session – Blackburn Town Hall 10am.

9. Complaints Update

The Panel were presented with a report which set out the current position with regard to communications relating to potential complaints received and an update on an ongoing complaint referred to at the Panel Meeting on 5 December 2023, in relation to the Police and Crime Commissioner and Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner.

In relation to the ongoing matter in respect of the PCC and DPCC, the Complaints Sub-Committee met on 1 February 2023. The Sub-Committee concluded that none of the allegations amounted to a crime and so did not need to be referred to the IOPC. They also decided to take no further action in accordance with regulation 15 of the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012. This was on the grounds that they considered the complaint and allegations to be vexatious, with no evidence presented that proved any wrongdoing by the PCC.

Since the last meeting of the Panel the Secretary has received another purported complaint against the PCC. It seems that matter relates to operational police matters and further clarification has been sought in relation to the concerns raised by the complainant.

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

10. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The Panel noted that the next meeting (Annual General Meeting) would be held on Monday 3rd July 2023 at 10am at Blackburn Town Hall.

Signed.....Chair
2023