

Police and Crime Panel for Lancashire

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 10th December 2018

Present:

Chair

Councillor Alistair Bradley, Chorley Borough Council

Committee Members

Councillor Andy Kay, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

Councillor Ben Aitken, Fylde Borough Council

Councillor Geoff Driver, Lancashire County Council

Councillor Munsif Dad, Hyndburn Borough Council

Councillor David Whipp, Pendle Borough Council

Councillor Brian Rollo, Preston City Council

Councillor Roger Berry, Wyre Borough Council

Also in attendance

- Clive Grunshaw, Police and Crime Commissioner
- Andy Rhodes, Chief Constable
- Chris Graham?
- Angela Harrison, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
- David Fairclough, Secretary
- Asad Laher, Head of Governance

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from Councillors Ivan Taylor, Liz Oades, Tony Martin, Adrian Lythgoe, Brendan Hughes, Caroline Moon, Ken Hind, Ged Mirfin, Kevin Wright and Independent Co-opted Members Altaf Baghdadi and Abdul Mulla.

2. Minutes of the meetings held on 10th December 2018

RESOLVED - The Minutes of the meeting held on 19th September were agreed as a correct record.

3. Declaration of interests

Councillor Geoff Driver declared an interest in Agenda Item 12 – Monitoring of Complaints.

4. Public Questions

No public questions had been received.

5. Presentation by Chief Constable Andy Rhodes

The Chief Constable for Lancashire, Andy Rhodes, delivered a presentation which focussed on:

- Current Position
- Core Services Purpose
- Changing Demand, Risk and Prioritisation
- Crime Recording Changes
- Contact and Response
- Serious Crime & Investigation
- Local Policing
- Place Based Approach
- Transforming for the Future

During the presentation, CC Rhodes received a number of questions, comments and observations and provided responses, with the key areas of enquiry for members of the Panel relating to Neighbourhood Policing, Fracking, Place based Policing, Response Times, and Recruitment Issues.

The Chief Constable advised that whilst acknowledging that improvements could and would still be made, he was personally very proud of what the Force was achieving, and he made reference to successful HMICFRS PEEL Inspection results – 3 ‘Good’ grades for Efficiency, Effectiveness and Legitimacy.

It was agreed that the Secretary would circulate the slides from the Presentation after the meeting.

RESOLVED – That the presentation be noted.

6. Performance Monitoring Report

The Commissioner updated the Panel on the latest performance monitoring information for the second quarter which covered 1st July 2018 to 30th September 2018.

In moving the report, the Commissioner referred to the delay in the local government finance settlement and the subsequent impact, and advised of the key budget pressures and on the consultation process timescales ahead of the setting of the proposed Precept for 2018/19.

The Commissioner received a number of questions and comments on the report, including comments on the make-up of the Pan Lancashire Anti-Slavery Partnership, the effect of County Lines focussed work, which the Commissioner advised was

showing good results, and the effect of £8million taken out of Neighbourhood Policing budgets and the subsequent impact on the visibility of local police. In terms of Neighbourhood Policing, the Commissioner advised that he was hopeful that there would be more flexibility in the use of the Precept to allow recruitment of more police officers, although there was currently a national issue relating to police pensions and a concern was that funding may be diverted to meet the pensions deficit.

Angela Harrison agreed to provide Cllr Roger Berry with details of a recent successful bid relating to Refugee Provision.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

7. Police and Crime Commissioner Decisions

A report was submitted which highlighted decisions made by the Commissioner and Director since the last Panel meeting on 19th September 2018.

RESOLVED- That report be noted.

8. Review of Police Complaints Procedures

A report was submitted which set out the current position with regard to the changes to be introduced to the Police Complaints regime as a result of the Police and Act 2017 and the likely timeframe for change.

The changes to the police complaints regime had been introduced in order to increase public confidence and to simplify the system, and the changes were outlined in the report submitted.

There were three options available to PCCs – Option 1, Reviews – Mandatory, with the PCC having an express duty in relation to the oversight of the complaints process, Option 2 – Customer Service approach for low level complaints, and Option 3 – Single Point of Contact with Complainants. The PCC had opted for Option 1, but would keep Options 2 and 3 under review.

The timetable for introduction was currently unclear, but it looked likely to be post March 2019.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted and that a further report be presented when the date for introduction of the changes is confirmed in 2019.

9. Members Expenses and Allowances

Further to discussions at recent meetings, a report was submitted in terms of the latest position relating to the potential payment of allowances and which advised of the need for further advice to be received.

This matter has been regularly considered by the Panel and most recently, on 19th September 2018. .

As was noted at the last meeting, there was no requirement to pay allowances to co-opted members and it was left to authorities to decide if they should be paid.

In respect of expenses it was clear from the Grant Claim Schedule that it was acknowledged that there would be some expenses incurred by Panel members. The grant Claim for Lancashire provided for up to £920 per member i.e. up to £16,560 per annum. To date the Panel had regularly underspent on this budget as it had primarily been used to reimburse attendance at external training events.

As reported in July 2018, since the earlier considerations of this matter by the Police & Crime Panel, a survey was undertaken by Frontline Consulting Associates. The result of their survey completed in January 2018 highlighted a practice that some Panels were clearly funding the payment of at least some allowances/expenses from the Home Office Grant whereas others were not. Payment from the grant for elected Panel Members would be 'at odds' however with the Guidance produced by the LGA in May 2012.

In November 2018, the Vice Chair and Panel Support Officer attended the Annual NAPFCP Conference and made enquiries as regards the current position and it was clear from discussions with colleagues and academics that clarification was required from the Home Office. Enquiries had been made of the Home Office and a response was awaited.

It was proposed that pending confirmation that any payments could be reimbursed from the Home Office Grant any proposals for changes to the Panel's existing practice for the payment of expenses/allowances be deferred until a future meeting.

RESOLVED – That the current position be noted and that a final decision be deferred until advice had been received from the Home Office.

10. Updates from Task and Finish Groups

A report was submitted on the progress of the four Task and Finish Groups established to report during 2018/19.

The Chairs of each Group updated the Panel on progress to date. For the Contact Centre Task and Finish Group, David Whipp acknowledged the efforts made to organise meetings, but that due to unavailability of members the full group had not got together, but that work was progressing in the background and it was hoped the group would be able to focus more on this topic in the coming months. Roger Berry reported a similar position for the Frontline Policing group, and that renewed efforts would be made to meet in the New Year. Brian Rollo updated on the Victim Services group, and the Chair agreed to join the group and would attend the next meeting. Finally, in the absence of any members of the Mental Health group being in attendance, it was noted that a meeting would be arranged in due course.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

11. Update from the Annual PCP Conference and AGM of Police, Fire and Crime Panels November 2018

The Vice Chair, Councillor Andy Kay, reported on the the Annual Conference of Police, Fire and Crime Panels held at Warwick University, which he attended along with Phil Llewellyn.

The Conference had been a really good opportunity to discuss issues shared in common with other Panels, and to share good practice. Much of the discussion at the Conference centred around the use of the Home Office Grant for funding membership of the LGA Special Interest Group and also payment of allowances, but there was also the opportunity to hear from a Senior Police representative and others about the national picture in terms of organised crime and changing trends and patterns, funding arrangements, Neighbourhood Policing and the critical friend relationship between PCCs and Chief Constables.

Councillor Kay also provided an update on discussions at the AGM of the Special Interest Group, where the issue of funding was discussed along with debates about political balance and appointments were made to key positions.

The Secretary agreed to circulate the slides from the various presentations at the Conference.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

12. Monitoring of Complaints

A report was submitted which set out the current position with regard to communications relating to potential complaints and complaints received up to 28th November 2018 in relation to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

RESOLVED – That the update in relation to Complaints be noted.

13. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

14. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Panel would be held on Monday, 21st January 2019 at 6.30pm at County Hall, Preston.

Signed.....Chair
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