

**AT THE MEETING OF THE WEST MIDLANDS
POLICE AND CRIME PANEL HELD AT THE
COUNCIL HOUSE, DUDLEY ON MONDAY 18
MARCH 2013 AT 1430 HOURS**

PRESENT:-

Birmingham

Councillor Jess Phillips (Vice Chairman)
Councillor Paula Smith
Councillor M Whitby

Coventry

Councillor S Bains
Councillor G Duggins (Alternate)

Dudley

Councillor Safeena Arshad
Councillor D Sparks

Sandwell

Councillor Julie Webb (Alternate)

Solihull

Councillor K Meeson

Wolverhampton

Councillor R Lawrence

Co-opted Independent Members

Mr N Drew

ALSO PRESENT:-

Bob Jones, West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner
Jacky Courtney, Chief Executive, West Midlands Office for Policing and Crime
Mike Williams, Treasurer, West Midlands Office for Policing and Crime
Dave Thompson, Deputy Chief Constable, West Midlands Police

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APOLOGIES

Apologies were submitted on behalf of the following: -

Councillor M Bird - Walsall
Councillor D Cooper – Sandwell
Councillor Paulette Hamilton - Birmingham
Councillor J Mutton – Coventry
Councillor T Oliver - Walsall
Mr L Walker

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

33 There were no declarations of interest.

MINUTES

34 Bob Jones, Police and Crime Commissioner, referred to the penultimate bullet point of Minute No. 25, Revenue and Capital Programme Proposals 2013-14, and advised that the reduction in the budget for his office should read 5.4%, not 2%.

Subject to the above amendment, the public section of the Minutes of the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel meeting held on 6 February 2013, having been previously circulated, was confirmed as a correct record.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chairman advised that, although no formal written questions from members of the public had been received, questions seeking clarification of BME issues and relating to Promotion Boards had been submitted via social media by Hubert Taylor and Mick Gillick respectively.

35 **RESOLVED:-**

That the questions be referred to the West Midlands Office for Policing and Crime for response, with a copy to the Panel Secretariat.

POLICE AND CRIME PLAN

The following report of the Police and Crime Commissioner was submitted:-

(See document No. 1)

Dave Thompson, Deputy Chief Constable, West Midlands Police, attended the meeting to present an advanced draft of the Police and Crime Plan, in conjunction with the Police and Crime Commissioner. He explained that the Plan had been formulated taking into account a range of factors including the Commissioner's election manifesto commitments, the strategic assessment conducted by the Chief Constable which identified the Force's strategic policing priorities, local priorities and the Strategic Policing Requirement.

In response to the concerns expressed by the Panel at its last meeting on 6 February 2013 regarding the 12% reduction in Community Safety funding from the Home Office, the Commissioner advised that he was making an additional £350k from reserves available to Community Safety Partnerships to bid for funding. Whilst Panel members welcomed his decision, they were disappointed to note that some of the comments made during preliminary consideration of the Plan at the previous meeting were not reflected in the latest version, for example, explicit reference to victims as a core strategy, the seriousness of hate crime and the incorporation of data from local police plans. The Commissioner acknowledged their concerns and reassured the Panel that changes would be made to the Plan prior to publication.

He also pointed out that the short timescale for production of the Plan had limited the scope for development of local policing plans. However, he hoped that ultimately, local policing boards would take ownership of local policing plans, thereby ensuring that they reflected community priorities.

Overall, Panel members felt that the Plan lacked clarity as to how aspirations would be achieved and targets measured, and were concerned that there was no specific accountability set out in a deadline-based action plan. There were also some areas where targets were not ambitious enough. The Commissioner explained that a series of strategies and strategic plans covering such areas as offender management, partnership working and crime prevention would be developed. He pointed out that there was a danger in focussing solely on those aspects of the service that could be measured quantitatively, and therefore a number of qualitative elements had been included, which would be measured through surveys of the public and staff.

During discussion, the following principal points were made in relation to specific elements of the Plan:-

- **Objective 3.1 – Improving public confidence in policing** - the Commissioner agreed with the Panel that the Plan should include reference to hate crime and domestic violence, but emphasised that the target would be to increase reporting of these crimes, not reduce offending.
- **Objective 3.2 – Creating stronger partnerships** - the Panel expressed disappointment that partnership working by the police with local authorities and other agencies was not accurately reflected in the Plan. Nor did the Plan refer to the troubled families agenda. It was also felt that the Plan should be better aligned to the local police and crime plans. The Commissioner agreed to re-examine these issues, and specifically asked for the Panel's support to increase police involvement in the Health and Well Being Boards across the region.
- **Objective 3.4 – Delivering better value for money** - the Commissioner agreed with Panel members that the West Midlands was not getting a fair deal from government in the allocation of the resources needed to deliver public services, and invited them to join him in a co-ordinated lobbying campaign.
- **Objective 3.7 – Better protecting people from harm** – with regard to children's safeguarding, the Commissioner confirmed that at a meeting with the heads of safeguarding the previous week, they had asked for a greater consistency of approach across the West Midlands, which he had agreed to facilitate. The Deputy Chief Constable added that he was leading on the review of safeguarding, and took local authority concerns regarding police attendance at case conferences very seriously. He would therefore write to local authority Chief Executives shortly to request the secondment of children's services' staff to assist with the review.

The Panel welcomed the development of a force strategy to tackle drug dealing, drug use and cannabis farming, but considered that tackling alcohol-related crime and anti-social behaviour should also be prioritised, and the justice system reviewed to address drunk and disorderly behaviour.

- **Objective 3.9 – Supporting stronger communities** - Panel members welcomed the aspiration to reduce crime on public transport further, particularly in light of the recent fatal stabbing of a school girl on a bus. They noted that crime and anti-social behaviour on the West Midlands' public transport system had reduced, but suggested that public perception indicated otherwise. The Commissioner advised that production of the Safer Travel Plan was at an advanced stage, and it would be presented to the Integrated Transport Authority in due course. The possibility of making effective use of Special Constables on public transport ("Commuter Specials") was being considered, and he hoped to persuade bus operators to contribute towards the cost of this initiative. He offered to circulate the draft Safer Travel Plan to the Leaders of the West Midland District Councils and Panel Members in due course.

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RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the comments made by the Panel be incorporated into its statutory report and taken into account when finalising the Police and Crime Plan for publication;
- (ii) that quarterly performance monitoring reports against the Police and Crime Plan be presented to the Panel's meetings in September, November, January and April each year (or on agreed dates to coincide with Police reporting cycles); and
- (iii) that consultation on any proposals or recommendations arising from the Police review of safeguarding be added to the Panel's Work Programme.

WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13

The following report of the Secretary was submitted:-

(See document No. 2)

37

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the next meeting of the Panel be held on 13 May 2013;
- (ii) that the indicative work programme and meeting frequency for 2013/14 set out in Section 3 of the report be noted; and
- (iii) that the Annual Meeting of the Panel be held on 17 or 24 June 2013.

URGENT BUSINESS

(A) Commissioning of Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs)

The following correspondence in relation to the question asked by Lisa Thompson, Chief Executive Officer, Rape and Violence Project, at the Panel's meeting on 21 January 2013 was submitted:-

(See document No. 3)

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RESOLVED:-

That the response of the NHS Commissioning Board be noted, and a copy forwarded to Lisa Thompson.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

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RESOLVED:-

That in view of the nature of the business to be transacted which includes exempt information of the category indicated the public be now excluded from the meeting:-

Minutes – Exempt information paragraph 3

PRIVATE

MINUTES

- 40 The private section of the Minutes of the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel meeting held on 6 February 2013, having been previously circulated, was confirmed as a correct record and the Minutes as a whole, as amended earlier in the meeting, were signed by the Chairman.

The meeting ended at 1550 hours.

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CHAIRMAN