

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AND CRIME PANEL HELD ON 1 FEBRUARY 2016 AT 1400 HOURS, BIRMINGHAM**

**PRESENT:-**

Cllr Mohammed Arif (Substitute) – Walsall  
Cllr Rose Burley – Walsall  
Cllr Darren Cooper – Sandwell  
Cllr Ken Hawkins – Solihull  
Cllr Diane Holl-Allen – Solihull  
Cllr Ann Lucas – Coventry  
Cllr Mike Leddy – Birmingham  
Cllr John Rowley – Wolverhampton  
Cllr Paul Tilsley – Birmingham  
Cllr Sharon Thompson – Birmingham  
Cllr Dave Tyler – Dudley  
Lionel Walker – Independent Member

**ALSO PRESENT:**

David Jamieson – West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner  
Yvonne Mosquito – Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner  
Jonathan Jardine – Chief Executive for the Office of PCC  
Mark Kenyon – Chief Finance Officer for the Office of PCC  
Sarah Norman - Chief Executive Dudley MBC / Panel Secretary  
Emma Williamson – Head of Scrutiny Birmingham/ Panel Lead Officer  
Julie Cooper – Head of Corporate Finance Solihull MBC  
Benita Wishart – Overview and Scrutiny Manager Birmingham  
Sarah Fradgley – Research and Policy Officer

**NOTICE OF RECORDING**

- 244 The Chairman advised that the meeting would be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via [www.birminghamnewsroom.com](http://www.birminghamnewsroom.com). The press and public could record and take photographs. The whole meeting would be filmed except confidential or exempt items.

**APOLOGIES**

- 245 Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Councillor Mike Bird and Nick Drew, Independent Panel Member.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- 246 None.

**MINUTES**

- 247 Subject to the correction to Minute No.233, to clarify that Cllr Paul Tilsley had previously been a Non-Executive Director of Birmingham Community Health Trust, but no longer held the position, the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

248 No public questions were submitted.

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**PANEL'S REVIEW OF THE POLICING PRECEPT AND BUDGET FOR 2016/2017**

249 The following report of the Police and Crime Commissioner setting out his proposals for the 2016/17 precept and revenue budget, and capital programme for 2016/17 – 2019/20 was submitted:-

(See document No. 1)

The PCC summarised the background to his budget and precept proposals, explaining that the provisional Government settlement gave PCCs in the 10 areas with the lowest precept the option to increase their average precept by £5 per year for Band D properties. The PCC announced that he would do this which would set the Band D precept at £111.55, an increase of 10 pence each week.

The PCC went on to highlight that the current funding formula may not be revised until 2018 and central government reductions in police funding had hit the West Midlands particularly hard because of the proportion of money it received from central government compared to the precept. The substantial increase in Home Office top slicing, new pension arrangements and the anticipated apprentice levy had also impacted on his budget.

The PCC's public consultation on the budget proposals received 293 responses, 66% were in favour of the proposal to raise the precept by an average of £5; 33% were against.

The PCC announced he would continue with the recruitment of 450 additional police officers and would look at the budget to see if recruitment could be extended further. There would also be no compulsory redundancies of Police Community Support Officers.

During the course of the debate the following points were made:-

Panel members commented on the 25% reduction in community safety funding to Community Safety Partnerships (CSP). Members welcomed the PCC's continued commitment to passport these funds to CSPs and noted funding had been protected up to this year, but asked the PCC to reassess the planned reduction. The PCC believed there was scope for CSPs to make efficiencies through, for example, joint commissioning and staffing and some areas had underspent. However he acknowledged there was a limit to the savings that could be achieved in future and offered to meet with individual local authorities to discuss collaboration on community safety matters. The matter of the allocation of the community safety funds was also mentioned and a review of the formula would be welcome.

Responding to questions about budget reserves the PCC advised there were plans to spend all but £30m of the reserves. Members felt there should be greater transparency on the use of reserves and asked for a breakdown of where and when they would be spent.

Members were told that a £12m General Reserve would be held in case of emergencies and the Budget Reserve and Budget Resilience Reserve were to be used over the next four years to support the Force to change and support the general budget of the organisation. Members acknowledged the need to hold a contingency but questioned the amount to be retained.

An overview of the £19.2m spending on projects within the 'Other WMP2020' category of the capital programme was provided and an offer was made to bring further details back to a future Panel meeting.

Responding to questions about recent press reports about low burglary arrest rates by West Midlands Police, the PCC explained the figures reported were misleading as they overlooked prolific individual burglars arrested for a number of crimes. He had raised the issue with the Chief Constable and had been reassured that the Force and neighbourhood policing teams were taking this matter very seriously.

A request was also made that for future consideration of the precept the PCC provide figures showing the year on year budget comparisons, to enable a greater understanding of how income and expenditure changed over time.

Sarah Norman then outlined the statutory duties of the Panel and it was

**RESOLVED:-**

- i) That the Panel agreed to support the Precept increase of 4.69% for 2016/17, based on an average precept increase of £5;
- ii) the Panel formally report to the Police and Crime Commissioner; and
- iii) the Panel publishes its report on its website.

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**POLICE AND CRIME PLAN SCRUTINY – PLAYING OUR PART RESPONDING TO NATIONAL THREATS**

- 250 The following report of the PCC updating the Panel on the Police and Crime Plan objectives that relate to responding to national threats, including the Strategic Policing Requirement, Counter Terrorism Unit, Organisation Crime Unit and Cyber Crime, was submitted:-

(See document No. 2)

The PCC responded to questions from Members and advised that:

West Midlands Police has finalised plans ahead of a protest by a right-wing group and organisers had given their assurance the protest would be peaceful. Members acknowledged the democratic right to protest, but asked if organisers could be charged for the cost policing such protests. It was noted that policing such events diverted officers from other local policing and impact on local centres and residents. Members concurred with the PCC that the West Midlands was a diverse area in which people from different backgrounds and cultures get on and respect religious freedom.

The PCC assured Members that Counter Terrorism officers worked closely with local authorities, stadia and retail management in preparing for possible terrorist attacks.

Responding to questions about cybercrime the PCC advised that the Force was working at a local, national and international level to tackle this growing crime. The issue had been discussed at the PCC's Annual Business Summit. He hoped to hold further events and invited Panel Members to attend.

Responding to concerns about the recent spate of hoax bomb threats on local schools and copycat threats, the PCC advised that it was a key priority. It was understood the hoax threats had been generated internationally. However there had been one local arrest of a copycat

hoaxer. The Department of Education had also issued advice to head teachers on decisions to evacuate.

**RESOLVED:-**

That the report be noted.

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**UPDATE ON RECRUITMENT OF INDEPENDENT PANEL MEMBERS**

251 The following report of the Panel Secretary was submitted:-

(See document No.3)

Members were provided with an update on the recruitment exercise for the two independent panel members and were asked for ideas on publicising the vacancies within their local areas.

**RESOLVED:-**

That the update provided be noted.

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**WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16 AND RECENT DECISIONS BY THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

252 The following report setting out the Panel's future work programme was submitted:-

(See document No.4)

**RESOLVED:-**

That the report be noted.

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**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

253 Monday 7 March 2016, Sandwell Council House.

Meeting ended at 1540 hours

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CHAIR