

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AND CRIME PANEL HELD ON 06
FEBRUARY 2017 AT 1400 HOURS, BIRMINGHAM**

PRESENT:-

Cllr Ken Hawkins – Solihull (Vice Chair)
Cllr John O’Shea – Birmingham
Cllr Peter DouglasOsborn – Birmingham
Cllr Fiona Williams – Birmingham
Cllr Abdul S Khan – Coventry
Cllr Pervez Akhtar – Coventry
Cllr Cathryn Bayton – Dudley
Cllr Preet Kaur Gill – Sandwell
Cllr Paul Sweet – Wolverhampton
Cllr Wendy Thompson - Wolverhampton
Lionel Walker – Independent Member

ALSO PRESENT:

David Jamieson – West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner
Ashley Bertie – Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner
Jonathan Jardine, Chief Executive, OPCC
Mark Kenyon – Chief Finance Officer, OPCC
Naresh Lekhi, Finance Officer, OPCC
Baseema Begum – Scrutiny Officer and support to FGM Task Force
Emma Williamson – Panel Officer

1. NOTICE OF RECORDING

- 309 The Vice Chairman advised the meeting that this meeting will be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via Birmingham’s City Council's Internet site (<https://birmingham.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcasts>) and members of the press/public may record and take photographs. The whole of the meeting will be filmed except where there are confidential or exempt items.

2. APOLOGIES

- 310 Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Cllr Sean Coughlan (Chair); Kristina Murphy and Sarah Norman.

Cllr Judy Foster, Assistant PCC, also sent her apologies.

3. MINUTES

(See document No. 1)

- 311 The minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Vice Chair.
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4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

312 None.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

313 None received

6. PANEL'S REVIEW OF THE POLICING PRECEPT AND BUDGET FOR 2017/18

314 The following report of the Police and Crime Commissioner, setting out his proposals for the 2017/18 precept and revenue budget, and Capital Programme 2017/18 to 2019/20, was submitted:

(See document No. 2)

The Commissioner noted that the budget has been discussed at two previous meetings, as requested by the Panel over two years ago. He then outlined the proposal to increase the precept by £5 on a band D property, to £116. This would still leave the West Midlands as one of the lowest policing precepts, and contrasts to Greater Manchester which has a band D precept of £162. He then made the following points:

- On the 16th December, the Leaders of the West Midlands authorities met and there was no dissent to the proposal.
- A public consultation was conducted with 250 responses (not as many as last year). 74% agreed with the increase in the precept.
- A meeting with business leaders was held and they were very supportive and the discussion focused on how crime can be reduced.
- Approximately £3.4m will be raised with the additional £5 increase. The increase will pay for around 70 new police officers. The HMIC have recently reported that West Midlands is one of the two most efficient forces in the country. Whilst the PCC is very proud of this fact, it does mean scope for further efficiencies is limited.
- The grant reduction this year is £6m and the force has lost around 1,900 officers. There is recruitment on-going, though there still will be a net reduction in officers. Around a third of the applications are from ethnic minority candidates.
- The council tax base has increased, so in cash terms, with the £5 increase, the budget will stay comparable with last year.
- Reserves are all earmarked for the next two years and will be significantly reduced by 2020.
- Community safety funding was cut by 25% last year but a two year settlement was agreed. At the end of that two year period, i.e. next year the PCC will be looking at how that money is used, perhaps in a more centralised way, whilst ensuring that local areas benefit.
- The current policing formula is over 10 years old and West Midlands police have never fully benefited from this, a loss of around £40m. A new process is now underway and

Chief Constable Dave Thompson is involved in the deliberations. The new formula should come in next year (2018).

- There have been increasing top-slicing of budgets by Government, which the PCC has not been happy with as the West Midlands have not seen the proportionate benefit.

Mark Kenyon, Chief Finance Officer then outlined the following:

- The budget is line with the medium term plan outlined in September's report to the Panel. There are still considerable pressures;
- The government settlement is worse than expected and is predicated on the £5 increase.

Questions from members followed and the following points were discussed:

- On reserves, there is no real difference between Budget Reserve and Budget Resilience; they were set up a number of years ago. It was suggested that the titles should refer to what they are used for;
- The PCC will provide more detail on the public consultation – it is not always possible to get a full breakdown.
- Currently there are £100m reserves, inherited from the Police Authority days. Following a pause in recruitment (after the Chancellor announced significant cuts) that has led to a position where the force is underspent but are now building staff numbers back up; £27m will be left by 2020 which is the minimum that should be kept in reserve.
- If the £5 increase is not implemented, that money will be lost for this and future years. The Government is adjusting the grant in expectation of this increase.
- Police pay and staff numbers are reducing but the PCC's office remains level; the PCC stated that as outlined above, the pay figures will increase and will build up over time (though younger officers, who do not cost as much as the longer serving, will mean a slight decrease in pay too). The PCC's office is expected to do a lot more than previously has been the case following the enactment of the 2017 Policing and Crime Act.
- The Supplies and Service budget covers all things that have to be bought e.g. fuel, IT, uniforms. The increase is a reflection of price increases. Purchasing and procurement has social responsibility elements built in, e.g. buying local. Some large contracts have been negotiated through a consortium e.g. vehicles.
- A base budget review was done at the start of austerity, and that is continued, alongside the transformation programme. National procurement routes are used where appropriate.
- £12m is the minimum reserve that the West Midlands should have; alongside that there should be reserves for insurance etc;
- Fees and charges are set each year, including that for football matches. There is a scale depending on the match. Around £1m a year is brought in through these charges. This is agreed on an annual basis. Police are not reimbursed for consequential policing e.g. the route to the ground, so there is room for lobbying for appropriate charging.

- With regards to the formula review, plans have been made within known parameters. However, WMP2020 will mean that costs will be reduced and whilst it is no means certain, the medium term budget should be met. By summer, deliberations on the new formula should be over and likely allocations revealed in the autumn.
- The government is considering the formula and there are a number of elements – population, social demands, geography, cost of living differences and tax base. A list of indicators will be produced for each area. The outcome will depend on the weighting given for each. If a raw population calculation, then the West Midlands will lose out, however it is hoped that other elements – young population, urban area, high levels of organised crimes etc – will be given weight.
- If the £5 increase were not implemented, then 70 officers would not be employed.
- On community safety funding, the PCC was reminded of the first principle outlined in the Panel’s report to him last year – that community safety funding should remain local.

RESOLVED:-

Emma Williamson then outlined the statutory duties of the Panel and it was

RESOLVED:-

- i) That the Panel agreed to support the PCC’s proposal that the Band D precept for 2017/18 should be set at £116.55 an increase of £5 compared to 2016/17;
- ii) The Panel formally report to the Police and Crime Commissioner, expressing their concern at the cost of policing large events; and
- iii) The Panel publishes its report on its website.

9. PCC’S UPDATE

315 The PCC updated the Panel on the following:

- Nominations for the Outstanding Citizen Awards are now open, for members of the public to nominate;
- West Midlands Police have been piloting an exercise looking at close overtaking of cyclists and the Police have spoken to a number of people;
- Last Wednesday the Combined Authority launched the Mental Health Commission; Chief Inspector Sean Russell is leading on this work.
- The recruitment of 150 PCSOs are well underway and are recruiting some over 50s to this role too.

Ashley Bertie, Assistant PCC reported that Amber Rudd, Home Secretary, had written to the PCC to congratulate him on the pioneering work they have done to increase diversity of the workforce.

The APCC and other officers have visited other forces with cadet schemes to see what lessons can be learned and will update the Panel in future meetings.

The PCC informed members that this Friday he was holding summit on unauthorised encampments, to get a cross party, cross region approach to deal with problems where they occur.

Members also raised the following:

- Parking in cycle lanes – the PCC said that he would check but he believed that static vehicles fall under the jurisdiction of the local authority arrangements,
- Cllr Thompson requested an update on Tettenhall police station

10. WORK PROGRAMME 2016/ 17 AND RECENT DECISIONS BY THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

(See document No.3)

316 Noted.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

317 Monday, 20 March 2017 at 1400 hours, Dudley Council House.

12. URGENT BUSINESS

318 None

The meeting ended at 1530 hours

CHAIR