

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AND CRIME PANEL HELD ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2017 AT 1400 HOURS, WALSALL

PRESENT:-

CLlr Sean Coughlan (Chair) - Walsall
CLlr Ken Hawkins (Vice-Chair) – Solihull
CLlr Cathryn Bayton – Dudley
CLlr Elaine Costigan – Sandwell
CLlr Peter DouglasOsborn – Birmingham
CLlr John O’Shea – Birmingham
CLlr Pervez Akhtar - Coventry
CLlr George Duggins - Coventry
Kristina Murphy – Independent Member

ALSO PRESENT:-

David Jamieson – West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner
Ashley Bertie – Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner
Lynnette Kelly – Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner
Jonathan Jardine – Chief Executive, OPCC
Mark Kenyon – Chief Finance Officer, OPCC
Naresh Lekhi – Accountant, OPCC
Emma Williamson – Lead Officer
Sarah Fradgley– Panel Support Officer

APOLOGIES

343 Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Cllrs Abdul Khan, Diana Holl-Allen, Andy Mackiewicz, Paul Sweet, Les Jones, Jayne Francis, Lionel Walker (Independent Panel Member) and Sarah Norman (Lead Chief Executive).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

344 None.

MINUTES

345 The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 31 July 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising – Minute 336 – The PCC advised Panel Members that 101 call waiting times had now reduced as the previously reported surge in call numbers had abated and call centre staffing levels had increased.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

- 346 The Chair advised that no public questions had been submitted that met the Panel's question time criteria.

REVIEW OF THE WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S ANNUAL REPORT

- 347 The following report of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) setting out his 2016/17 Annual Report was submitted:-

(See document No.1)

Presenting the report the PCC thanked the dedication of officers doing exceptional work in difficult circumstances. He highlighted key achievements of the previous year including the Zombie Knife campaign and collaborative working to reopen motorways following incidents. The PCC praised the work of the Youth Commissioners to re-establish the police cadets, and outlined his current work with the West Midland Mayor. Members congratulated the commitments to make the force and the PCC office reflective of the communities they serve.

The PCC highlighted a new piece of research that quantified the cost of drug use on the region's crime levels, health, communities, education, public services and the business sector, and that work was programmed to understand the impact and interventions needed.

Members discussed budgetary pressures. The PCC reported that West Midlands Police was one of the only forces with an outstanding efficiency rating by HMIC, but the drive for efficiencies continued. Responding to questions about the possible lifting of the public sector pay cap, the PCC explained he was waiting to learn whether this would be government funded. Members noted the impact on police numbers and neighbourhood policing if the pay increase had to be met from existing resources at a time when a seven-day service was needed.

The Panel questioned the PCC on the performance information in the report. Members welcomed that crime rates were doing well compared to other similar forces and reporting of hidden crimes had risen, but were concerned the recent Crime Data Integrity inspection by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) had rated the Force inadequate at recording reported crime with 38,000 reports of crime a year not recorded. The PCC advised that he was digesting this report, suggesting it could be a result of system changes. He would be discussing it with the Strategic Policing and Crime Board and the Chief Constable and agreed that a report would be brought to a future meeting of the Panel.

It was suggested that public perception of police required work and also how the police respond to big issues affecting communities. Attitudes to petty crime was changing and Members feared incidents may not be reported if the public felt the police could not respond or did not have the ability to resolve issues.

The Panel noted complaints recorded against the police had dropped by 25%, but the time taken to deal with complaints had increased and was above the England and Wales average.

The PCC acknowledged this was not where he would like things to be, but also that recorded complaints were more complex than in comparison with other forces as in the West Midlands many complaints were resolved at first point of contact and not recorded. Members noted the PCC hoped to address this when the new police complaints regulations came into force in April 2018.

Members welcomed the efforts by WMP to engage with the public on social media but considered that information shared was often “after the fact” and it would be useful to engage with people at earlier stages, to help them prevent and avoid crime.

RESOLVED:-

That the response from the Public and Crime Panel arising from the discussion on the Annual Report be sent to the Police and Crime Commissioner and published on the Panel website.

Disturbances by Member of the Public

- 348 During the course of the previous item a member of the public made disrupting noises and was asked to remain quiet in the public gallery as Panel Members complained it was difficult to hear what was being said.
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POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER COLLABORATION

- 349 The following report providing information on the collaboration work of the PCC , including joint working with the West Midlands Mayor and Combined Authority, work with the National Ballistics Intelligence Service, and regional collaboration with other police and crime commissioners and police forces, was submitted:-

(See document No.2)

The PCC introduced the two Regional Policy Officers that had begun working for the four PCCs in the wider region.

The PCC spoke of the work to bring Warwickshire into the Central Motorway Policing Group and his disappointment that West Mercia had announced its intention to leave to deliver a roads policing model across West Mercia and Warwickshire.

Responding to questions from Members the PCC advised whilst there had been force collaboration around vehicle procurement, savings for other commodities would be marginal.

RESOLVED:-

That the report be noted.

Disturbance by Member of the Public

- 350 A member of the public continued to make disrupting noises and distributed leaflets during the course of the previous item and was asked to return to their seat in the public gallery.

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER GRANT EXPENDITURE AND POLICE FUNDING

- 351 The Panel received and noted the following report that gave the latest position regarding national police funding , the arrangements the PCC has in place from grant funded activity, and the proposal to establish a West Midlands Community Safety Partnership:-

(See document No.3)

The PCC advised that Government police grant made up 85% of WMP funding. This was currently £441m but the funding formula used penalised the force by £40m per annum.

The PCC explained how the Active Citizens Fund is allocated to each Neighbourhood Policing Unit for projects developed with the community to promote active citizens and the PCC's Victims Commissioner to allocate the Victims Fund from the Ministry of Justice to services for victims including restorative justice.

The PCC reported that the Community Safety Funding passported by the PCC to local authorities since 2012. It was still underspent and so he had developed a new central funding approach for next year. A West Midlands Community Safety Partnership would involve representatives from each authority, in the spirit of the Combined Authority. His aim was to reduce duplication and bureaucracy. He had asked each local authority to identify their priority issues to fund going forward.

RESOLVED:-

That the contents of the report be noted.

Disturbance by Member of the Public

- 352 A member of the public continued to make disrupting noises during the course of the previous item.

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE

- 353 The following list of recent decisions made by the PCC was received and noted:-

(See document No.4)

The PCC advised the Panel of the following:

There had been a spike in the number of violent crimes in the Region. However this trend did not follow previous geography, age and ethnicity patterns.

The Strategic Policing and Crime Board was to look at the impact on all services (police, health and local authorities) of drug use across the Region.

Assistant PCC Lynnette Kelly reported that recruitment of PCSOs had begun, now that HR department and systems had been re-established.

WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AND CRIME PANEL BUDGET FOR 2016/17 AND 2017/18

- 354 The following report of the Panel Secretary detailing Panel costs for 2016/17 and setting out the budget for 2017/17

(See document No. 5)

RESOLVED:-

That the Panel expenditure for 2016/17 and forecast spending for 2017/18 be noted.

WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18

- 355 The Panel received and noted the Work Programme for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

(See document No. 6)

RESOLVED:-

That a report responding to the points made by the HMICFRS be added to the panel's work programme.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 356 It was confirmed the next meeting of the Panel would be held on Monday 27 November 2017.

The meeting ended at 1550

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CHAIR