

Minutes of a meeting of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel held at County Hall, Glenfield on Monday, 17 March 2014.

PRESENT

Mr. J. T. Orson JP CC (in the Chair)

Cllr. David Bill MBE
Cllr. J. Boyce
Cllr. A. V. Greenwood MBE
Miss. H. Kynaston
Cllr. William Liquorish
Col. R. Martin OBE, DL

Cllr. Trevor Pendleton
Cllr. Byron Rhodes
Cllr. Sarah Russell
Cllr. Lynn Senior
Cllr. D. Slater
Cllr. Manjula Sood, MBE

Apologies

Cllr. R. B. Begy and Cllr. Paul Westley

In attendance

Sir Clive Loader, Police and Crime Commissioner, Simon Cole, Chief Constable, Paul Stock, Chief Executive and Helen King, Chief Finance Officer

52. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 January were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

53. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

54. Declarations of Interest.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations were made.

55. Change to the Order of Business.

The Chairman sought and obtained the consent of the Panel to vary the order of business from that set out in the agenda.

56. Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy.

The Chairman read out the following statement in relation to this item:

“This is a matter of very serious concern to all of the authorities represented on this Panel and taxpayers and should properly be the subject of debate here. However, given that there are legal proceedings which are ongoing and, having taken advice from the County Solicitor, it is clear that in the present circumstances it would be difficult for the Panel to

have an informed discussion. I am therefore of the view that this item should be deferred for discussion at a later meeting of the Panel when it will be possible for a full debate to take place. That debate should include consideration of all of the implication of this case, including economic development and employment opportunities and working in partnership.”

RESOLVED:

That the item be deferred to a future meeting of the Panel.

57. PCC Question Procedure.

The Panel considered a report of the County Solicitor seeking its views as to whether a public questions procedure should be adopted at meetings of the Panel. A copy of the report, marked “Agenda Item 4”, is filed with these minutes.

In introducing the item, the Chairman referred to correspondence he had received from Col. Robert Martin recommending two changes to the Procedure, as follows:

- Questions should be allowed from members of the public at any time;
- In order to encourage questions from those members of the public without access to the internet, questions should be accepted by post.

Arising from a debate on the questions procedure, the following points were noted:

- It was felt that questions submitted were likely to fall into one of two categories: questions of a “general” nature - which were less likely to be time sensitive and questions of an “urgent” nature relating to items of business on the Panel agenda. Some felt that it would be worth having different time restrictions for submission to the Secretariat for each category. A suggestion was made for “general” questions to be submitted no less than 15 working days prior to the next Panel meeting and “urgent” agenda-related questions to be submitted no less than 3 working days prior to the meeting;
- There was support for allowing members of the public to address the Panel directly, however it was felt appropriate for the Panel to take “ownership” of the questions to be asked of the PCC. Questions would be allocated to the elected members of the Panel, if appropriate, on the basis of the area they represent;
- It would be important that, as part of any work to publicise the launch of a public questions procedure, public expectation was managed by making the key principles of the procedure clear;
- The Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) already received many enquiries in relation to the Police and Crime Commissioner’s (PCC’s) role and attended a number of public sessions at which the public were encouraged to engage with him. It would be important to publicise these avenues as well as the Panel’s Public Question Procedure;
- A suggestion was made for the Panel to consider a six monthly report on the questions that had been submitted and their nature;

- The PCC welcomed the opportunity to engage the public in his and the Panel's work. Though the intention was to filter questions relating to operational policing matters to the Office of the Chief Constable, the PCC asked that he also be made aware of their nature in order that he could keep abreast of the sorts of issues raised by the public.

RESOLVED:

That, subject to amendment in light of the comments now made, the Procedure for Questions to be submitted to the Panel from members of the public be approved for further consultation with the OPCC.

58. Performance Report to 31 January 2014.

The Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner concerning an overview of the performance of Leicestershire Police towards achieving strategic priorities in the Police and Crime Plan. The report was deferred from the previous meeting of the Panel. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 6", is filed with these minutes.

In introducing the report, the Chief Constable reported that an audit programme of its data was due in May to be tested by Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Constabularies (HMIC). It was suggested that the Panel might be interested in the outcome of this work.

Arising from questions of the panel, the following points were noted:

- The performance figures presented were tied to the financial year though it was recognised that the performance figures for November 2012 onwards (the election of the PCC) would be more helpful to assess how the PCC and the Force were performing;
- The PCC stressed the importance of the commissioning work he was currently engaged in, which would hopefully address some of the rising crime figures and the Force's budget shortfall. It was expected that the Force would lose around 250-300 frontline officers in the coming years;
- Officers were engaged in cross-border work to tackle the rising rate of burglaries. It was noted that it was sometimes the case that these types of criminal targeted houses over a wide area in order to evade detection;
- It was questioned whether the overall crime reduction target of 5% was ever likely to be achievable, given the trends of rising crime across the country. It was stated that the 5% target was set by the HMIC;
- It was felt that it would be useful for the Panel to see some of the trends coming from the Force's peers in the Most Similar Group (MSG) however; Leicestershire had been put in an MSG with Forces to the south of the country. Whilst the Midlands and the North were areas of the country which were experiencing the highest rises in crime. It was felt that further data around the trends of the MSG would be helpful for the Panel to see in future as well as data on police satisfaction levels. The PCC had set a broad target around achieving the average crime rate of the MSG on an annual basis. One suggestion was made for comparative data in

relation to “stop and search”;

- Theft from vehicles, such as theft of catalytic converters and number plates, was a priority issue as part of efforts to tackle rural crime;
- The demography of the City was more complex than the County. It was felt that it would be helpful to have crime data broken down in future by Local Police Unit.

RESOLVED:

That the report and comments made be noted.

59. Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill.

The Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Leicestershire County Council concerning an overview of aspects of the Anti-Social Behaviour and Policing Bill (ASB Bill) that may be of relevance to the PCC and broader overview of the ASB Bill. A copy of the report, marked “Agenda Item 7”, is filed with these minutes.

It was noted that the “Community Remedy” power which would sit with the PCC represented a good opportunity to simplify the tools available to deal with minor ASB issues. It would be necessary to seek the views of the voluntary sector as part of the consultation process on the changes put forward. It was felt that this issue would be of particular interest to the Community Safety Partnerships.

RESOLVED:

That the report and comments made be noted.

60. Victims and Witnesses - Police and Crime Plan Thematic Update.

The Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner concerning an overview of the work undertaken and planned in respect of the Victims and Witnesses theme of the Police and Crime Plan. A copy of the report, marked “Agenda Item 8”, is filed with these minutes.

The Chief Executive reported that a small team had been assembled within the OPCC in order to progress this area of work. Confirmation had been received from the Home Office that the funding for this work from 2013/14 could be carried forward into 2014/15.

- The Ministry of Justice wanted commissioners to improve the offer to victims and witnesses and remove what it saw as a “postcode lottery”. It was hoped that this would enable a more consistent offer across the country;
- Funding would continue to be allocated to Victim Support up to April 2015 in order that it could continue to provide victim support services. A full review would be taking place of the offer by a range of other agencies in order to consider how best in future to offer these services.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

61. Date of next meeting.

It was NOTED that the next meeting of the Panel would be held on 9 June at 2.00pm.

2.00 - 5.15 pm
17 March 2014

CHAIRMAN