

Minutes of a meeting of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel held at County Hall, Glenfield on Tuesday, 26 July 2016.

PRESENT

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

Cllr. Ratilal Govind	Cllr. Ozzy O'Shea
Cllr. Malise Graham	Cllr. Rosita Page
Cllr. Kevin J. Loydall	Cllr. Trevor Pendleton
Col. Robert Martin OBE, DL	Cllr. Lynn Senior
Cllr. Kirk Master	Cllr. David Slater
Cllr. Tony Mathias	Cllr. Manjula Sood, MBE

Apologies

Cllr. Lee Breckon, JP and Mrs. Helen Carter

In attendance

Lord Willy Bach, Police and Crime Commissioner,
Roger Bannister, Assistant Chief Constable and
Helen King, Chief Finance Officer (OPCC)

15. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 June were taken as read, confirmed and signed, subject to the amendment of the second line of the first paragraph of Minute 9 being amended to read "...covering his four year term of office.".

16. Public Question Time.

There were no questions submitted.

17. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

18. 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.

19. Performance Report to Quarter 1 (April-June) 2016/17.

The Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner concerning a performance report to quarter 1 (April to June) 2016/17. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 5", is filed with these minutes.

Prior to debating the report, the Chairman explained to members that the matter was before the Panel as a sole agenda item as a means of informing the Commissioner's preparation of his first Police and Crime Plan. The draft version of that document was scheduled to be considered by the Panel at its meeting in December following consultation with partners.

In introducing the performance report, the Commissioner drew members' attention to the fact that the report covered some of the period prior to him having taken office. He particularly welcomed the Home Office's announcement for a review of hate crime following a national spike in reported incidents following the EU referendum.

Arising from a discussion, the following points were noted:

- The latest figures in respect of hate crime for the Force area were provided by the Deputy Chief Constable. 92 incidents had been reported during the period between 17 June to 25 July - 2 of which related to disability, 74 of which related to race, 9 of which related to religion/belief, 6 of which related to sexual orientation and 1 of which related to "other". It was pleasing that the number of hate crimes appeared to be reducing though the Panel welcomed the Commissioner's commitment to continue monitoring the situation closely and report on the matter at the Panel's meeting in September. Though the former Prime Minister had announced some additional funding to assist the police in handling the issue of hate crime, no further details on this had been forthcoming under the new Prime Minister, Theresa May;
- The suggestion for a joint statement from the Force and the Commissioner with regard to how the Force and partners intended to deal with hate crime and some of the associated principles would be considered by a forthcoming meeting of the Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategy Board;
- A further meeting would be taking place on 4 August on the anti-social behaviour (ASB) issues in Countesthorpe. It would be important that the County Council's IMPACT Team were represented at this meeting;
- The Chairman had attended a meeting of the County Council's Scrutiny Commission on 13 July at which he had been invited to report on the past year's Police and Crime Panel activity. Two issues ((a) and (b) below) had been raised as a concern at that meeting and were put to the Commissioner accordingly:
 - (a) The Force's strategic response to lower priority crimes such as theft of and from motor vehicles.

In response, the Deputy Chief Constable reported that the response to all reported incidents fell into the following four categories: emergency, priority, appointment to caller and telephone service. In assessing the response required, control room staff used the "THRIVE" acronym: Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigative opportunities, Vulnerability and Engagement. The response given also took into account any historical or repetitive nature of the incident and whether it had impacted a person or not. It also took into account any opportunities to collect evidence;

- (b) Clarity around what constituted a crime and the regulations around recording of incidents.

In response, the Commissioner reported that he was in the process of looking at principles that lay behind the categorisation of crimes as being higher or lower priority. He acknowledged that it was possible that some changes may be required. The Deputy Chief Constable reported that the way in which the Force recorded incidents and crimes was of crucial importance to the Force. “Incidents” were broadly defined as being single distinct occurrences which disturbed people and communities. These could be incidents such as ASB or a road traffic collision. What constituted a “crime” was governed by the Home Office counting rules and the national crime recording standard. A “crime” was defined as being as such if a “criminal act” had taken place (an example was given of where a mobile phone had been “stolen” rather than “lost”). The Force’s record on its recording of crimes and incidents was felt to be good, a recent audit having found that of a sample of 150 crimes, 164 should have been recorded and 158 were recorded – a compliance rate of 93.6%.

- A recent showing of a short film based on the attack and death of Sophie Lancaster at Groby Community College was felt to have been a huge success which had positively impacted students and received good feedback;
- In response to a question around the inconsistent use of “most similar group” or national comparators through the report it was noted that this was mostly due to the availability of data in certain performance areas. The OPCC was willing to work with the Panel to agree a new way of reporting crime datasets in the future. The requirement for reports to be understandable for the public as well as the Panel was emphasised;
- The average time for handling of called to the 101 number was currently 15 minutes. The average time was at one stage around 7 minutes and the Commissioner felt that the current statistics in this area were unacceptable and were, in his view, one of the consequences of the Government’s austerity agenda. The Deputy Chief Constable indicated that the recent drop in performance had meant that the service had gone from being “excellent” to merely “satisfactory” and further drop in performance would be cause for concern. Though performance had dropped, it was felt that it had levelled off and a further drop was unlikely. A number of matters were being pursued as a means of improving the service, such as: a shift pattern review to ensure the right resources were available at peak times, rectifying IT glitches which had resulted in “stacking up” of a high volume of calls, Contact Handler vacancies being filled and a new “call back” option to enable the public to called back at a time that suited them;
- Though call abandonment rates were felt to be low, the Commissioner felt that more could be done to utilise the 101 service to provide advice to callers;
- The definition of what constituted a “Child Sexual Exploitation” (CSE) crime was currently the subject of a national consultation exercise by the Crown Prosecution Service. CSE was currently regarded as affected those under the age of 18 and could fall under a number of different types of incidents, such as online grooming. The Commissioner was of the view that CSE should perhaps also relate to those over the age of 18 who had learning difficulties which made them more childlike in their understanding of the world. The Commissioner indicated that the Panel could be consulted for its views on the consultation and the outcome would be reported back at the appropriate time;

- Criminal investigations were overseen by a senior officer and a senior detective to ensure high standards;
- An explanation as to how the Force worked with other agencies to tackle environmental crimes would be circulated following the meeting;
- The commitment to bolster the tackling of cybercrime, which was known to be one of the fastest growing crime types, and remain officer and PCSOs at current levels would inevitably lead to some cuts in other areas, subject to any positive change in the Force's funding position. The Commissioner stated that some of the associated cuts were likely to be unpopular. He added that some issues currently dealt with by the Force, such as tackling re-offending might be best be achieved by other partners, thus perhaps alleviating the Force's challenging budget position. He intended to clarify this position in his Police and Crime Plan which would be consulted on in the Autumn;
- In response to a question raised around the likelihood of rural communities becoming the victims of any further cuts to the Force, the Commissioner stated that he had already met with representatives of the National Farmers' Union in an effort to understand the issues these communities faced. He would also be liaising with the County Council on this issue and stated that some good work was already underway to tackle rural crime;
- The protection of police officers had come into focus as a result of the recent death of Jo Fox MP and other acts of terrorism across the country and Europe. The security arrangements in place for officers was felt to be working well;
- The Commissioner felt that there remained a place for "front desks" at stations as a means of providing a personal interface between the public and the Force. Arrangements were in place to enable the public to hand in evidence at their local stations. Some detailed statistics concerning footfall at local stations would be circulated to Panel members following the meeting;

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the performance position as at quarter 1 (April-June) 2016/17 be noted;
- (b) That the timing of the Panel's consideration of a detailed report around the Commissioners' actions to address the drop in call handling performance be discussed between the OPCC and the Secretariat.

20. Date of next meeting.

It was NOTED that the next meeting of the Panel would be held on 26 September at 1.00pm *[it was subsequently agreed that this meeting would move to 23 September at 1.00pm].*