

Minutes of a meeting of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel held at County Hall, Glenfield on Monday, 18 March 2019.

PRESENT

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

Cllr. Lee Breckon, JP
Cllr. Ratilal Govind
Cllr. Malise Graham
Ms Mehrunnisa Lalani
Cllr. Kevin Loydall
Cllr. Abdul Osman

Cllr. Elaine Pantling
Cllr. Trevor Pendleton
Cllr. Janice Richards
Cllr. Michael Rickman
Cllr. Manjula Sood, MBE
Cllr. Deborah Taylor

Apologies

Mr Keith Culverwell and Cllr. Alan Walters

In attendance

Lord Willy Bach – Police and Crime Commissioner
Kirk Master – Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner
Paul Hindson – Chief Executive, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
Chief Constable Simon Cole – Leicestershire Police.

53. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2019 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

54. Public Question Time.

There were no questions submitted.

55. Urgent items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

56. Declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.

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

Cllr. M. Sood declared a personal interest in respect of all substantive items as a member of the Police's Independent Advisory Panel, as a member of the Leicester Council of Faiths and a member of the Bishop's Faith Forum.

Ms. M. Lalani declared a personal interest in respect of all substantive items as she had a close relative that was a member of the Police Cadets.

57. Recruitment, Retention and Progression in Leicestershire Police.

The Police and Crime Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) which provided an update on the processes, campaigns and outcomes for the recruitment of police officers and the promotions, dismissals and employment tribunals relating to the Force. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 5', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussions the following points were noted:

- (i) The demographics of police officers and staff within Leicestershire Police did not fully reflect the demographics of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland though some recent improvements had been made. Leicestershire Police were ranked fourth in the country for being representative of the Force area. The PCC had decided that making the Force more representative was a priority, was firmly holding the Chief Constable to account for progress made in this area, and would not be satisfied until the Force was much more reflective of the area it policed. However, the PCC had not set any specific targets or timescales. It was expected that in the next 5 years over 750 police officers in Leicestershire Police would retire which created an opportunity to make the Force more representative by ensuring the new intake were of more diverse backgrounds. Engagement events were being held across the county to attract people from all backgrounds to join the Force. Recruitment for PCSOs would be opening in March 2019 and for police officers in April 2019.
- (ii) Whilst Leicestershire Police had altered its own recruitment practices in order to increase the number of applicants from BME backgrounds that made it through the initial stages of the process, the applicants still had to pass a national assessment process known as SEARCH and this was where many BME applicants were failing.
- (iii) Members raised concerns about the lack of BME officers at the higher ranks within Leicestershire Police. In response it was explained that applicants who applied at the Direct Entry level to become an Inspector or Superintendent were also required to pass a national assessment which some BME candidates struggled with and this partly explained the lack of BME officers at those ranks. It was anticipated that the numbers of BME officers at the higher ranks would increase as the overall numbers of BME staff in Leicestershire Police increased.
- (iv) Where there was more than one applicant for a role and two applicants were at the same level of ability the law allowed the Force to prioritise an applicant if they were from a background that was underrepresented in the Force. Leicestershire Police occasionally took advantage of this opportunity when appropriate.
- (v) The report did not provide full statistics relating to LGBT police officers and staff because due to the small numbers involved, the people referred to may be identifiable and this would breach data protection regulations.
- (vi) In response to a question about whether police officers were required to speak good English it was explained that whilst police officers were required to have a sufficient level of English to be able to give coherent evidence in Court for example, the Force also looked for officers that had cultural competence i.e. they could be sensitive to the different communities that they served. In addition, training on cultural competence was provided to officers once they had joined the Force.

- (vii) From 2020 all police officers would be required to have a degree and the PCC had concerns about this as he felt it would prevent some people that had the skills to be a good police officer from joining because they were not academically gifted. The traditional graduate entry scheme was no longer available and instead there would be the following routes into the police:
- Pre-join degree - those who already had a degree in policing would be able to join the police straight away and complete a short on the job training programme;
 - Degree holder entry - those who already had a degree in another subject would be able to undertake a conversion course leading to a graduate diploma in professional policing practice;
 - The Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship where the applicant would join a police force as a police constable and undertake a three-year apprenticeship in professional policing practice which would lead to a degree-level qualification.
- (viii) The Government retained 5% of the Leicestershire Police budget in order to provide the apprenticeship programme therefore the only way for Leicestershire Police to take advantage of that funding was to take part in the apprenticeship programme. The programme would be run locally in partnership with De Montfort University.
- (ix) Police cadets were a good way of encouraging young people to join the Force and the demographics of the cadets was much more representative of the Force area. However, there was a rule prohibiting a person from becoming a police officer until they reached the age of 18. Leicestershire Police was conducting a pilot where people under the age of 18 were able to apply to be a police officer but postpone joining until they reached the age of 18. This was designed to make the transition from cadet to police officer easier and more attractive. The pilot had been agreed to by the College of Policing though it was subject to legal challenge.
- (x) The procedure within Leicestershire Police for promotions was that staff would be given a temporary promotion and then undertake a work based assessment process whilst carrying out that temporary role. The statistics provided in the report did not include those that were on temporary promotion, only those that had been substantively promoted.
- (xi) All police officers and staff were offered exit interviews. The main reason people left was retirement and only a small proportion left because they were not happy with the job. Many PCSOs became warranted officers. There was currently no way of forcing people to remain as an employee of Leicestershire Police therefore there was a risk that once people had completed the apprenticeship programme and received all the training and the degree they could still find employment elsewhere. However, members were assured that the majority of staff at Leicestershire Police had long careers with the Force. If the level of staff turnover did become a problem then measures to encourage staff to remain would be considered.
- (xii) In an update to the information provided in the report there were now 8 ongoing employment tribunal claims for Leicestershire Police as one had been dealt with since the report had been written.
- (xiii) The PCC firmly refuted the allegations made before the Home Affairs Select Committee by the President of the National Black Police Association Sergeant Tola Munro that Leicestershire Police was institutionally racist. The PCC and Chief Constable had a meeting arranged with Sergeant Munro for April 2019 to discuss the allegations.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the report and the continued positive action approach adopted by Leicestershire Police be noted.
- (b) That the President of the National Black Police Association Sergeant Tola Munro be invited to a private meeting with members of the Police and Crime Panel to discuss the approach of Leicestershire Police towards BME staff.

58. Performance Report - Quarter 3.

The Police and Crime Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner regarding the performance of Leicestershire Police for the period 1 October 2018 to 31 December 2018. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 6', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussions the following points were noted:

- (i) When the 101 telephone service was set up it was intended that the public would be able to use the number to directly contact specific police officers. However, officers were not always on duty when the telephone call was made therefore the public were not able to get through to them at certain times. Members suggested that a mailbox system should be used so that the public could leave phone messages for individual officers, and the PCC agreed this idea was worth considering.
- (ii) Recent abandoned call rates were as follows:
December 2018 12.8%;
January 2019 10.5%;
February 2019 13.5%;
March 2019 11.8%.
However, the abandoned calls figures could be misleading because when a member of the public called the 101 service the automated message suggested other phone numbers or agencies that the caller could try. Therefore the caller may have gained the information they required without the 101 call being answered.
- (iii) A member asked for online crime reporting figures to be included in future performance reports and the PCC agreed to this request.
- (iv) It was noted that the reported incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) had reduced by 938 compared to the same quarter in the previous year and members raised concerns that ASB was underreported. In response the PCC stated that he did have reservations about the accuracy of crime figures and particularly in relation to ASB. However, it was likely that the figures for the previous year were also underreported therefore it could be assumed that there had been some improvement from year to year.
- (v) Clarification was given on the difference between a crime and an incident. It was explained that during one incident more than one crime could have been committed. Also in one telephone call from the public several incidents or crimes could be reported. Most motoring offences were not crimes.

- (vi) In response to a question from a member it was acknowledged that there had been an increase in hate crimes in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland since the recent terrorist attack in Christchurch, Newzealand.
- (vii) A member was of the view that there needed to be greater regulation and control over social media to prevent crimes occurring. The PCC agreed with this but stated that he had no powers over social media companies and suggested government ministers should be lobbied to increase the onus on social media companies to take action.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

59. Human Trafficking and Modern Day Slavery.

The Police and Crime Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner which provided an update on Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 7', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussions the following points were noted:

- (i) Members thanked the PCC for the report and for highlighting the extent of the problem. Members welcomed the proposed investment in a supervisor and six police officers to tackle issues such as Modern Slavery using money from the recent precept increase.
- (ii) Whilst work was being undertaken by Leicestershire Police with regards to Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking, a clearly defined strategy had not yet been developed. An action plan would be completed later in the year and an event would be held to publicise the issue.
- (iii) A member stated that messages needed to be disseminated to the public on where and how to report Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the report be noted;
- (b) That the PCC be requested to provide a further report on Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery for the September 2019 Police and Crime Panel meeting.

60. Date of next meeting.

RESOLVED:

It was noted that the next meeting of the Panel would be held on 20 May 2019 at 2:00pm.