

Minutes of a meeting of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel held at County Hall, Glenfield on Monday, 22 July 2019.

PRESENT

Cllr. Michael Rickman (in the Chair)

Cllr. David Bill MBE
Mr Keith Culverwell
Cllr. Kevin Loydall
Mr. I. D. Ould OBE CC
Cllr Alan Pearson

Cllr. Les Phillimore
Cllr. Manjit Kaur Saini
Cllr. Deborah Taylor
Cllr David Wilby

Apologies

Cllr. Hemant Rae Bhatia, Ms Mehrunnisa Lalani, Cllr. Elaine Pantling and Cllr. Sharmen Rahmen

12. Minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2019.

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 3 June 2019 were taken as read, confirmed and signed subject to amendment to minute 7(viii) so that it reads:

“In response to a question about local policing the PCC clarified that there would be more investment in neighbourhood policing in the wider sense, and the ability of the Force to respond to incidents and investigate crimes would be enhanced as a result of the Precept increase.”

13. Public Question Time.

There were no questions submitted.

14. Urgent items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

15. 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.

Mr. K. Culverwell declared a personal interest in respect of all substantive items as he had two close relatives that worked for Leicestershire Police.

16. Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report.

The Police and Crime Commissioner requested that consideration of his Annual Report be deferred until the Panel meeting on 24 September 2019 in order to give further time for statistics to be produced and verified. It was noted that although the Constitution of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel stated that ‘By July, the PCC shall provide the Panel with a copy of his annual report’, the legislation did not require the Annual Report to be published in July.

The Secretariat reported that the Panel's Monitoring Officer was undertaking a review of the Panel's Constitution to ensure it was up to date and fit for purpose and this could include consideration of the section relating to the Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That consideration of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report be deferred until the Panel meeting on 24 September 2019.
- (b) That when reviewing the Panel's Constitution the Monitoring Officer be requested to give consideration to the time scales for the Panel's consideration of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report.

17. Annual Performance Report.

The Police and Crime Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) regarding end of year performance for 2018-19. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 6', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussions the following points were noted:

- (i) The PCC confirmed that the 999 telephone service should only be used in an emergency and at the time a crime was taking place. Leicestershire Police believed that the increase in the volume of 999 calls was due to a rise in violent offences being committed. It was not believed that people were calling 999 because they were unable to receive an answer from the 101 service. The reduction in the number of 101 calls was believed to be due to an increase in online reporting. The PCC reported that the Chief Constable was of the view that the online reporting service was extremely efficient and provided a quick response. With regards to the amount of 101 calls that were classed as abandoned the PCC clarified that this included calls where the automated message gave the caller alternative numbers to call so in fact it could be that the caller received the information they required and was satisfied. Therefore the abandonment figures could be misleading. A member suggested that it would be useful to be able to monitor at which point the call was abandoned to see whether it was the automated message that was causing people to end the call. The PCC acknowledged that there was still some dissatisfaction with the 101 service and further work was required to be undertaken to make improvements. A member pointed out that if callers were unable to receive a response from the 101 service they might call back later which may affect the figures for overall volume of 101 calls.
- (ii) A member sought and gained reassurances that 999 calls were being triaged appropriately and received the correct level of response.
- (iii) In response to a question from a member the PCC agreed to investigate how the length of the calls to Leicestershire Police compared to the length of calls to other forces and if this information was available provide it to Panel members. A member suggested that the quality of the response to the call was more important than the speed and this included the quality of the service provided when the incident was passed onto other officers to deal with. The PCC agreed with this view.

- (iv) The PCC invited new Panel members to visit the contact management centre at Force Headquarters in Enderby. Panel members had previously undertaken a visit to the contact management centre and found it extremely informative.
- (v) A member raised concern that there were no Key Performance Indicators for Leicestershire Police performance and questioned what level of performance the Police and Crime Commissioner expected or demanded given that there were no targets. In response the PCC stated that in his view there was little benefit in predicting future performance levels and setting targets. The PCC stated that he believed the current performance report was of benefit because it showed trends and how performance compared to the previous year.
- (vi) With regards to the +23% growth in missing persons between the 2017/18 year and the 2018/19 year a member questioned whether this increase could be due to a change in the criteria for categorising missing people and whether the two sets of figures were comparable. Members also requested that the figures for missing persons be broken down into age groups so that trends could be identified for example the amount of elderly people with dementia going missing. The PCC agreed to check whether these pieces of information could be provided and report back to the Panel. The PCC praised the work of the Leicestershire Search and Rescue Unit who were volunteers that provided support to the police. The PCC had provided the unit with a £35,000 grant to help fund the development of a new, fully-equipped, mobile Incident Command Unit. In response to a question from a member the PCC stated that most missing people were found safe and well.
- (vii) The Panel asked that in future performance reports the Domestic Abuse figures be broken down into violent and coercive offences. The use of control and manipulation such as 'gaslighting' was becoming increasingly prevalent. A member questioned whether consideration had been given to whether perpetrators of Domestic Violence could be required to pay the costs of policing incidents. The PCC explained that this was not part of the criminal justice process; the focus was on deterring the perpetrators from committing crimes in future. A Domestic Abuse Bill was currently before Parliament which introduced additional measures to tackle the problem.
- (viii) A member questioned whether Anti-social Behaviour had in fact decreased as the figures indicated because his perception was that it had not. The PCC stated that he believed there had been a reduction in Anti-social Behaviour offences though acknowledged that there could be underreporting. The public were not always sure what constituted Anti-Social Behaviour and what could be reported.
- (ix) Leicestershire Police had been provisionally allocated £880,000 of funding from the Government's £35m Serious Violence Fund to set up a Violence Reduction Unit. Eighteen of the 43 Police forces had been allocated the funding based on hospital admissions figures relating to knives. A member questioned whether the hospital admissions figures took into account patients that resided in Leicestershire that attended hospitals out of the county such as the George Elliot Hospital in Nuneaton. The PCC confirmed that for the purposes of the figures it was where the hospital was located that counted not where the person resided therefore it was possible that the hospital admissions figures for Leicestershire under represented the amount of knife crime in the county. Receipt of the funding for the Violence Reduction Unit was dependent on the government approving a detailed application

setting out how the money would be spent. Once the funding was received it was intended to appoint a Chief Executive for the Violence Reduction Unit and use the Public Health approach to tackle knife crime in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland involving partners such as Local Authorities, the probation services and the health service. Although this approach had worked well in Glasgow a member raised concerns that it may not be so effective in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland and suggested that the success in Glasgow could have been due to the personnel involved rather than the merits of the scheme. Police and Crime Panel members had been invited to attend a Strategic Partnership Board meeting scheduled for the 6th August where plans for reducing serious violence across LLR would be outlined and the Director of the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit, Niven Rennie, would be in attendance. A member questioned whether this meeting would be recorded as not all members were able to attend and the PCC agreed to give this consideration. The funding for the Violence Reduction Unit was required to be spent by the end of the financial year which brought into question the sustainability of the Unit and how it would be funded from 2020/21 onwards. It was not clear whether the Violence Reduction Unit would need to be funded by the Precept. Panel members shared the concerns of the PCC regarding this lack of clarity and offered to write to the Policing Minister in support of the government continuing the funding for the Violence Reduction Unit beyond 2019/20. The PCC thanked the Panel for its support but asked the Panel to delay sending its letter until a formal response had been received from the government to the funding application.

- (x) The PCC had provided £107,020.62 of funding for 10 projects to tackle knife crime. (A copy of the table setting out details of the projects is filed with these minutes.) Most of the projects were focused on Leicester city but they also covered Leicestershire. It was too early to judge the success of the projects but a report could be brought to the Panel in future outlining how effective they had been.
- (xi) The PCC agreed with members that early intervention was key which was why he had invested in early intervention projects.
- (xii) A member questioned whether it was fair and appropriate to attribute hate crime spikes to events publicised in the media such as terrorism and Brexit. In response the PCC stated that the figures clearly showed a rise immediately following these events therefore it was clear there was a link.
- (xiii) It was clarified that rape offences were classified as historical if the difference between the reported date and the start date of the offence was over one year, not 6 months as incorrectly stated in the report.
- (xiv) The PCC praised the work of Leicestershire Police and local authority partners for the success of Operation Lionheart which tackled County Lines activity involving the sale and distribution of drugs. The Police were increasingly looking to charge offenders with the offence of modern slavery in addition to drug offences because the modern slavery offence came with longer sentences and more of a stigma than drug offences.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the report be noted;

- (b) That the Police and Crime Commissioner be requested to provide a report for the Panel meeting on 24 September 2019 regarding the Violence Reduction Unit.
- (c) That should Leicestershire Police receive a positive response from the government to its application for funding for the Violence Reduction Unit, the Police and Crime Panel write to the Policing Minister in support of the funding being continued beyond March 2020.

18. Regional Collaboration.

The Police and Crime Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner regarding regional collaboration. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 7', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussions the following points were noted:

- (i) The PCC acknowledged that regional collaboration was important as criminals did not only operate within county boundaries. In response to a question the PCC explained that whilst Leicestershire Police did not have any formal collaboration arrangements with West Midlands police forces, such as they did with East Midlands forces, Leicestershire Police did work closely with West Midlands forces. The PCC stated that whilst increasing collaboration with the West Midlands in the future was desirable it may not be possible.
- (ii) Members raised concerns that police officer training was not conducted on a national basis and therefore there were no economies of scale. The PCC explained that individual forces liked to train their own staff in accordance with local requirements. He accepted that there was an argument in favour of more collaboration on training but said it would be difficult to get support for this idea nationally.
- (iii) In response to questions about the governance of EMSOU it was explained that the Deputy Chief Constable that was in charge of the Unit was employed by Leicestershire Police but he reported to all the Chief Constables in the East Midlands region. There were occasional disagreements between the Chief Constables regarding EMSOU but overall the Unit worked well.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

19. Date of next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the next meeting of the Panel take place on 24 September 2019 at 2:00pm.