

Minutes of a meeting of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel held at County Hall, Glenfield on Monday, 2 December 2024.

PRESENT

Mrs D. Taylor CC (in the Chair)

Cllr. Liz Blackshaw

Parisha Chavda

Cllr. Sarah Cox

Cllr. Mohammed Dawood

Cllr. Kevin Loydall

Cllr. Les Phillimore

Cllr. Sarah Russell

Cllr. Christine Wise

Cllr. Andrew Woodman

In attendance

Rupert Matthews – Police and Crime Commissioner

Rani Mahal – Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner

Claire Trewartha – Chief Executive, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Kira Hughes – Chief Finance Officer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Siobhan Peters – Director of Strategy, Partnerships & Commissioning, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

34. Minutes of the meeting held on 28 October 2024.

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 October 2024 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

35. Public Question Time.

There were no questions submitted.

36. To advise of any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent elsewhere on the agenda.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

37. 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.

No declarations were made.

38. Police and Crime Commissioner's Update

The Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) which provided an update on his work throughout September and October 2024. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 5', is filed with these minutes.

In introducing the report, the PCC highlighted that the data included within Table 1 on page 13 of the report, which outlined community engagement, was a duplicate of the information provided within the last PCC's Update. It was agreed that the correct data

would be included within the next PCC's Update, to be presented at the meeting on 5 February 2024.

Arising from discussion, the following points were noted:

- (i) The PCC confirmed that he was undertaking internal reviews with the OPCC focussing on community based commissioning. The reviews aimed to ensure that there was a good level of public engagement with the public across the Force area. The outcome of the reviews would be shared with the Police and Crime Panel.
- (ii) With regards to community days attended by the PCC, feedback from residents continued to inform the work undertaken by the PCC and the Force in order to address issues. The PCC confirmed that he planned to undertake work which focussed on road safety issues, as the issue continued to be raised by residents and local authorities. The Panel were invited to submit suggestions for future community engagement activity to the PCC.
- (iii) In response to a question relating to outcomes connected to grant funding for community based commissioning, the PCC confirmed that quarterly monitoring and end of year evaluations took place, and additional due diligence reviews were conducted to ensure that the PCC had oversight of project performance and had regular opportunity to address concerns relating to performance.
- (iv) The Chairman raised a question relating to the potential development of a Children and Young Peoples Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) within Leicestershire. The East Midlands Children and Young People's Sexual Assault Service had centres in Nottingham and Northampton. The OPCC confirmed that the existing centres would be required to pass an accreditation process before additional sites could be considered.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the Police and Crime Commissioner's update be noted.
- (b) That the PCC be requested to include the latest data relating to community engagement within the Police and Commissioners Update to be presented at the meeting on 5 February 2024.

39. Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner's Update.

The Panel considered a report of the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC) which provided an overview of how she was fulfilling her delegated duties. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 6', is filed with these minutes.

Rani Mahal announced that she would step down from the role of DPCC on 9 December 2024, in order to invest more time in her primary role as a District Councillor in Harborough. The DPCC thanked the PCC, OPCC, the Panel, and partners for their support, and the Police Force for its work in keeping communities safe.

The PCC and the Panel thanked Rani Mahal for her invaluable support and for the work that she had undertaken within the OPCC.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner's update, be noted.

40. Corporate Governance Board.

The Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner which provided an update on how he was fulfilling his duty to hold the Chief Constable to account for the performance of the Force through Corporate Governance Board meetings. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 7', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were noted:

- (i) A question was raised relating to the OPCC's Hate Crime Review regarding what reporting had been carried out which focussed on geographical areas and protected characteristics. The OPCC confirmed that deep dive analyses were undertaken in order to understand the rate of hate crime experienced by individuals from different localities within the Force area and by individuals with protected characteristics, as well as their satisfaction with the response from the Force.
- (ii) Concern was raised relating to a sustained high staff vacancy rate held within the Force and whether vacancies had an impact on service delivery. The PCC assured members that the impact on service delivery continued to be limited due to the types of vacancies held, and that critical posts would be prioritised for recruitment. A particular concern was raised by a Panel member that there was a vacant beat officer post within the Rutland area and that this represented a 25% reduction in the officers in the area. The PCC assured the Panel that he had raised this concern with the Chief Constable and that a beat officer would be appointed for Rutland as soon as a suitable candidate was available.
- (iii) The PCC confirmed that the Local Criminal Justice Board was chaired by the Chief Constable rather than himself. This decision had been made as the Chief Constable was responsible for the national criminal justice portfolio and so it was felt appropriate for him to hold both responsibilities. It was suggested that a report on the work undertaken by the Local Criminal Justice Board could be presented to the Panel at the next meeting.
- (iv) The Chairman raised strong concern that the Force were overachieving savings whilst proceeding with a reduction of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), from 200 FTE to 150 FTE, despite uncertainty regarding the awaited financial settlement. The PCC acknowledged that the reductions were a concern and stated that to date all staff redundancies had been voluntary. The Panel noted that the Government had stated its intention to deliver 13,000 new neighbourhood officers, which were expected to be a combination of police officers, PCSOs and special constables. However, the OPCC were awaiting further information on this policy, particularly relating to how it would be funded.

RESOLVED:

That the update in relation to the Corporate Governance Board be noted.

41. Annual Scrutiny Reports.

The Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner which provided an outline of how he was fulfilling his duty by holding the Chief Constable to account using independent scrutiny functions, namely the Joint Audit and Risk Assurance Panel (JARAP) and the Ethics and Transparency Panel. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 8', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were noted:

- (i) In response to a question regarding how agenda items for meetings of the Ethics and Transparency Panel were determined, the OPCC stated that the agenda for meetings of the Ethics and Transparency Panel were set in accordance with its Terms of Reference. The Panel was responsible for enhancing external and internal trust and confidence in the ethical governance and actions of Leicestershire Police and the Office of The Police and Crime Commissioner. Officers across the Force could raise ethical dilemmas raised by individuals within the Force and discussions also took place relating to issues focussed on by sub-panels.
- (ii) A question was raised regarding whether the PCC was confident that members of the Ethics and Transparency Panel had the necessary expertise to effectively scrutinise officers across the Force in order to provide assurance for public trust and confidence. The PCC assured the Panel that members of the Ethics and Transparency Panel had all of the resources in place to ensure that they were able to effectively scrutinise areas of concern across the Force.
- (iii) In response to concern raised regarding the level of inappropriate conduct expressed by police officers, which had been reported by members of the public, the PCC assured the Panel that the issue had been escalated urgently with the Chief Constable. Feedback was provided by the Chief Constable and additional oversight work had been developed. The Panel would be kept updated on progress in this area.

RESOLVED:

That the report outlining the annual reports of the Joint Audit and Risk Assurance Panel and the Ethics and Transparency Panel, be noted.

42. Rape Offences.

The Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner which provided an overview of how he was fulfilling his duty by commissioning services to support victims of crime, specifically domestic and sexual offences and outlined how he was holding the Chief Constable to account for the performance of the Force in relation to rape offences. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 9', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were noted:

- (i) Strong concern was raised by the Panel regarding the overall performance relating to rape outcomes, low detection rates, and the traumatic impact this had on victims. The PCC stated that he acknowledged and shared the panels concern. Although it was important to note that Leicestershire Police was not

an outlier when it came to rape outcomes, he and the Chief Constable would continue to focus on improving performance in this area. He recognised the trauma which victims faced following a sexual assault, as well as throughout investigation and conviction processes. The PCC assured the Panel that he would raise the issue urgently with the Chief Constable and would consider the work being undertaken by neighbouring authorities in order to improve outcomes relating to rape, particularly the Nottingham Consent Coalition.

- (ii) A question was raised relating to low force detection rates relating to rape offences and how work undertaken within the Operation Soteria workstream would aim to improve this performance. The OPCC stated that it had focussed on moving towards a perpetrator focussed approach rather than victim focussed background. Work would be undertaken to ensure that a number of police officers were trained in responding to rape offences and a pilot programme was being developed to ensure that individuals had access to a crisis support worker 365 days per year. It was anticipated that this work would improve the number of convictions.
- (iii) With regards to prevention work, the OPCC confirmed that funding had been allocated through Round Five of the Safer Streets Fund to support women and girls at risk of violence. Work was also being undertaken to deliver prevention work to both young girls and boys relating to appropriate behaviour and consent. The work would aim to address the attitudes and behaviour that often underpinned crimes of violence against women and girls.
- (iv) In light of the concerns raised by the Panel about rape offence outcomes, it was suggested that a sub-group of the Panel should be established in order to provide additional scrutiny of the Police and Crime Commissioners activity and the performance of Leicestershire Police when it comes to rape offences. Further discussions relating to the details of the sub-group work would take place following the meeting.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the update provided on the performance of the force in relation to rape offences, be noted.
- b) That a sub-group of the Police and Crime Panel be established in order to provide additional scrutiny of the Police and Crime Commissioners activity to hold the Force to account when it comes to rape offences.

43. Commissioning Update.

The Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner which provided an update of commissioning activity and a summary of progress to date. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 10', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were noted:

- (i) A question was raised regarding how the OPCC would encourage young victims to engage with the work of victim services. The OPCC stated that they would work with Catch 22 and Victim First in order to identify potential participants. The Panel noted that the OPCC would encourage victims over the

age of 18 to engage with the work. The Violence Reduction Network (VRN) had a Community Oversight Group (COG) which engaged with young people over 16 years of age. The COG aimed to directly influence, shape, and scrutinise the VRN's interventions and projects through regular interactive meetings.

- (ii) Concern was raised that the report from the Police and Crime Commissioner had not made reference to a reduction in Drug Testing on Arrest (DToA) and that the Panel had therefore not had the opportunity, at this meeting, to scrutinise the issue. The OPCC stated that funding for DToA had been reduced by government and that whilst other funding sources had been considered, it would not be possible to continue with the work at the same rate. The OPCC went on to assure the Panel that it would lobby the Ministry of Justice on this matter as the work which had been undertaken on DToA to date had been positive.
- (iii) The Panel were pleased with the work which had been undertaken within round five of the Safer Streets Fund in tackling neighbourhood crime, violence against women and girls and anti-social behaviour, particularly the work of those volunteers and PCSOs who had supported the initiative.

RESOLVED:

That the update in relation to commissioning activity and a summary of progress to date, be noted.

44. Finance Update.

The Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner which provided an update on the finances of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Leicestershire Police in advance of the Panel considering the Police and Crime Commissioner's proposed Precept 2025/26 and Medium Term Financial Strategy at the Panel meeting on 5 February 2025. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 11', is filed with these minutes.

In introducing the report, the PCC stated that the referendum limit for the police precept had been announced by the government but that the OPCC were awaiting information from the government relating to the Police Grant for 2025/26.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- (i) The OPCC confirmed that the Government would subsidise the increase in employer national insurance contributions, which had been announced in the latest budget. However, concern was raised regarding the extent that these changes would have on commissioned services and contractual arrangements. It was expected that there would be a direct impact in terms of an increase in costs.
- (ii) In response to a question regarding the impact of the implementation of the 2024/25 Police pay award, the OPCC confirmed that the Government had agreed to fund the 4.75% pay award for Police Officers and Police Staff.

RESOLVED:

That the updated provided on the finances of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Leicestershire Police in advance of the Panel considering the Police and Crime Commissioner's proposed Precept 2025/26 and Medium Term Financial Strategy, be noted.

45. Update on how the Police and Crime Commissioner and Police Force are implementing the recommendations that were provided as part of the Police and Crime Panel Tasking Group S106 Funding Review.

The Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner which provided an outline of how he and the Force were implementing the recommendations that were provided as part of the Police and Crime Panel Tasking Group Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 funding review. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 12', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were noted:

- (i) The OPCC confirmed that a number of bids for developer contributions had been rejected by local authorities but stated that this included rejections from developers also. The Panel were encouraged by the Chairman to raise this issue within their authorities. The Chairman stated that she would participate in discussions with developers relating to the reasons behind rejections.
- (ii) The Chairman requested that rather than reports relating to the implementation of recommendations provided as part of the S106 funding review coming to every single Panel meeting as had been agreed in the past, they now be presented to the Panel on a six-monthly basis, due to the positive progress made in this area.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the update on how the recommendations provided as part of the Police and Crime Panel Tasking group S106 funding review were being implemented, be noted.
- b) That reports relating to the implementation of recommendations provided as part of the S106 funding review now be considered on a six-monthly basis.

46. Annual Complaints Report.

The Panel considered a report of the Director of Law and Governance at Leicestershire County Council which provided the Police and Crime Panel with an update on complaints relating to the PCC over the last 12 months. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 13', are filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

That the update relating to complaints received relating to the Police and Crime Commissioner over the last 12 months, be noted.

47. Date of next meeting.

RESOLVED:

It was noted that the next meeting of the Panel would be held on 5 February 2024.

2.00 - 3.47 pm
02 December 2024

CHAIRMAN