

Minutes of a meeting of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel held at County Hall, Glenfield on Tuesday, 3 October 2017.

PRESENT

Cllr. Trevor Pendleton (in the Chair)

Cllr. John Boyce
Cllr. Lee Breckon, JP
Cllr. Ruth Camamile
Mrs. Helen Carter
Cllr. Stephen Corrall
Cllr. Ratilal Govind

Cllr. Malise Graham
Cllr. Abdul Osman
Cllr. Michael Rickman
Cllr. David Slater
Cllr. Manjula Sood, MBE
Cllr. Alan Walters

Apologies

Col. Robert Martin OBE, DL

In attendance

Lord Willy Bach, Police and Crime Commissioner
Assistant Chief Constable Rob Nixon

1. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 July 2017 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

2. Public Question Time.

Councillor Slater submitted the following question to the Police and Crime Commissioner on behalf of his fellow Member at Charnwood Borough Council, Councillor E. D. Snartt.

“I am receiving concerns from residents about the level of policing in the rural areas of my ward, Forest Bradgate. In recent years Neighbourhood Policing has been the cornerstone of policing in local rural areas.

Noting the aims of the Police and Crime Plan 2017–2021: “making communities and neighbourhoods safer by concentrating on visible policing”, I would like to raise the following:

- Is there an acknowledgement that neighbourhood policing in rural areas is no longer viable with the current level of resources allocated to these areas?
- Request an urgent review on how policing in rural areas is carried out to overcome the real concerns of local people including the farming community.
- Request a review of the communication links with the Police, which should include local Neighbourhood Watch Groups.”

Reply by Police and Crime Commissioner:

The PCC offered to provide a written response to the question within 5 days and by way of oral response stated the following:

- Rural crime was taken extremely seriously by Leicestershire Police and the Force remained committed to Neighbourhood Policing. However the lack of resources had implications on the actions that could be taken to tackle rural crime. As Leicestershire was neither predominantly urban nor rural this made it more difficult to allocate resources. The new police operating model under Project Darwin aimed to decentralise resources and locate police officers in the heart of communities which should have a positive impact on rural crime.
- Meetings had taken place with Parish Councils and Chairs of Community Safety Partnerships in order to co-ordinate the response to rural crime. Further collaboration with community groups such as Neighbourhood Watch was also taking place.

Councillor Slater stated that he would reserve asking his supplementary question until he had seen the written response from the PCC.

3. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

4. 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.

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

Mrs Helen Carter declared a personal interest that might lead to bias in respect of Item 10: Independent Members of the Police and Crime Panel, as she would be personally affected by the decision on the matter, and stated that she would leave the room during consideration of that item.

5. 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 so that item 11: Venues of Police and Crime Panel meetings would be taken ahead of item 10: Independent Members of the Police and Crime Panel.

6. Statement from the Police and Crime Commissioner in response to the HMIC report - Leicestershire Police: Crime Data Integrity inspection 2017.

The Police and Crime Commissioner read out the following statement in response to the report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) entitled Leicestershire Police: Crime Data Integrity inspection 2017:

"You will all be aware of the report by HMICFRS, some of you may even have read it, some may have glimpsed the not too flattering headlines.

There are a few observations that I would like to make regarding this report and its 'inadequate' conclusions.

Firstly, while naturally I'm disappointed with the conclusions, I have to say I'm not that surprised. There are only so many financial efficiencies you can make before they become counter-productive and cracks begin to show.

I've discussed what needs to be done to improve matters with the Chief Constable and I'm confident that active steps are being taken to address the key issues

I am further reassured that HMI recognises the work to address such recording issues in the future, welcoming the improvements in the scheduling of non-urgent diary appointments to see victims of crime. Now, all such appointments should take place within 24 hours of the report of a crime.

Secondly, Leicestershire is not an outlier. There are similar findings for the majority of other forces inspected so far.

Why? Well there are some administrative anomalies that need addressing, but I also think that the constant changes in crime recording are unhelpful – and certainly confusing to the public.

Last year every force recorded an increase in reported criminality. It is expected that this will be repeated this year. In Leicestershire apparently we have incorrectly recorded around 21K crimes. But, to me, the big question is: have the number of victims increased or is this down to the requirements of the recording mechanism. In the main, I believe this is purely an administrative increase.

Yes, I am aware that some violent crimes were incorrectly categorised and as I've said, I am reassured at the work to address this.

The most important point, in my view, is to make sure that we are doing the right thing for victims; that we are identifying victims of crime and providing the appropriate support and referral to specialist services where needed and dealing with offenders more effectively than ever.

I am confident that the review of services I commissioned this year will see even better services available to all victims of crime.

But we also have to look at the overall picture and in common with many other Police Forces we have seen a continual growth in demand which, in short means that we have moved from a "typical day" in which we dealt with around 750 incidents to today's norm of in excess of 900 – and sometimes well beyond that.

I also understand that some of these inaccuracies can be attributed to the change in the crime-recording system, moving to NICHE, and a change in the force operating model designed to produce savings.

In essence, this report is not about quality of service, it is a narrative about the integrity of our administrative processes and the confluence between different IT systems.

Project Darwin is looking carefully at a number of processes and systems to address this, and other issues, and we will be looking to implement changes that ensure our administrative work in recording crimes is compliant.

We believe that there is a need for more specialist units to undertake the body of recording work but resources will need to be found to create such a specialist unit. Project Darwin will be exploring the best way of achieving this with the least impact on front line visibility.

Darwin will also see:

- *The establishment of a triage desk in the Contact Management Department. This will triage crimes as they come in and ensure they are allocated to the right team for further investigation*
- *The creation of a new Neighbourhood Investigation Unit. The Force currently has a number of centralised teams who investigate crimes. This change will see that investigative function put back out into the neighbourhoods and co-located alongside Neighbourhood Policing Team. It aims to ensure the victims gets a better service and to improve our investigative and local problem solving capability*
- *A review of Response Teams. This piece of work is looking at how many resources are in the Priority Response Teams and where response hubs are located. No specific decisions have been made about this as yet, but we do recognise there is a need to increase the number of officers working within this important frontline area of service.*

Project Darwin aims to implement an evolving policing model focused on improving our performance, effectiveness and customer service. It will also oversee the changes we need to make to our administrative functions in response to the report on the integrity of the crime recording system.

HMICFRS will return in 2018 to inspect our progress. I know that you too will want to hear about that progress, so with that in mind, I think it would be pertinent to bring a report to our December 2017 meeting if that is alright with you Mr Chairman."

Arising from Panel members' questions the following points were noted:

- (i) Concerns were raised that contrary to the PCC's statement the problem of inaccurate recording was not as a result of underfunding but more related to procedural and training issues within Leicestershire Police. Members were also of the view that the fact that other Police Forces had received similar criticisms from HMICFRS did not excuse the fact that Leicestershire Police had been rated as inadequate with regards to crime recording. In response it was stated that Leicestershire Police did acknowledge that further education of Police officers was required with regard to crime recording and all staff were going through refresher training.
- (ii) In response to a question the PCC confirmed that prior to the inspection by HMICFRS he was not aware that there was a problem with the way Leicestershire Police were recording crime. In fact Leicestershire Police themselves did not know there was a problem and it was the view of Leicestershire Police that the guidance provided by the Home Office on the new methodology of crime recording had been inadequate. Nevertheless, the PCC stated that he was always present at debriefings from HMICFRS and the Chief Constable had informed him once HMICFRS had raised the issue relating to crime recording.
- (iii) There had been no concerns raised by HMICFRS with regard to the reporting of acquisitive crimes such as burglary.

- (iv) In response to a question of how the PCC was going to monitor the accuracy of crime recording by Leicestershire Police going forward, it was explained that there was an audit regime in place and the quality assurance team which had been disbanded as part of efficiency savings would now be re-instated.
- (v) Reassurance was given that although a crime was not recorded every single time a victim of modern slavery who had been forced into prostitution was forced to have sexual intercourse, that victim was treated as a rape victim by Leicestershire Police and provided with all the support that a rape victim would normally get.
- (vi) Concerns were also raised that Leicestershire Police were not responding to every report of Domestic Violence relating to particular complainants; instead they were treating several reports relating to particular complainants over a period of time as one crime. In response the PCC stated that whilst he could not guarantee that this problem had been resolved immediately, work was ongoing to implement a system that would fulfil the reporting requirements set out by HMICFRS.
- (vii) With regard to the statement in the HMICFRS report that some Leicestershire police officers were reluctant to record some types of crime that young people may have committed in order not to criminalise them, Members endorsed this pragmatic approach but raised concerns about the apparent lack of a clear policy on this across the Force.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the PCC's response to the HMICFRS report be noted;
- (b) That the PCC submit a report to a future meeting of the Panel regarding progress made by Leicestershire Police in addressing the concerns raised by HMICFRS with regard to the accuracy of crime recording.

7. Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire Update.

As the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner had given his apologies for this meeting the Panel resolved to defer this item until the next meeting.

8. Update on 101 and 999 telephone services.

The Police and Crime Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner which provided an update on the performance of the 999 and 101 telephone services. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 8', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussions the following points were noted:

- (i) Two Panel Members who recently had cause to use the 101 telephone service stated that it worked well and they received a quick response and were provided with regular updates.
- (ii) The new telephone system would include a call-back facility so that callers would not have to wait long periods on the phone for somebody to answer.

- (iii) In response to a question from a Member it was explained that the Crimestoppers reporting facility was entirely independent to that of Leicestershire Police and did not link in with the 999 and 101 telephone services.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

9. Project Darwin.

The Police and Crime Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner which informed of proposed changes to the policing model used by Leicestershire Police entitled Project Darwin. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 9', is filed with these minutes.

The following points were noted:

- (i) Project Edison had been implemented in 2014 due to a lack of resource at that time and whilst Edison had produced the savings required, it was no longer fit for the current demand. The new policing model would see the redeployment of resources from the central base to neighbourhood bases and it was expected that this change would occur on 23 October 2017. Changes to the Missing Persons Team as specified in the report would take place at the end of November 2017.
- (ii) Members welcomed the move to deploying more resources in neighbourhood locations and the consequent increase in visibility which would result. It was clarified that when operational need required officers from Neighbourhood Investigation Units could be required to attend incidents in other parts of the County however this would only be as a last resort.
- (iii) The Member from Rutland raised concerns that the nearest Neighbourhood Investigation Unit to Rutland would be in Market Harborough and therefore it would still take officers an unreasonable length of time to respond to incidents in Rutland. The PCC acknowledged that this was not ideal however he pointed out that the new policing model would have better response times than under the old system where resources were centrally located. The PCC stated that he had been involved in the agreement of the principles behind Project Darwin and he had confidence that it would lead to improvements in Police performance.
- (iv) In response to a question from a Member the PCC agreed that partnership working and a multi-agency approach was vital to tackle repeat offenders and he hoped the Strategic Partnership Board could play an important role in this. However, he raised concerns that the Community Rehabilitation Company did not attend Strategic Partnership Board meetings. In response to concerns raised that under the new policing model the force would only be reactive in dealing with crime rather than proactive in tackling problems before they arose, reassurance was given that there would still be some capability to be proactive instead of just reactive.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed changes to the policing model be noted.

10. Venues of Police and Crime Panel Meetings.

The Panel considered a report of the Secretariat which set out the results of the trial of holding 2 meetings a year at City Hall. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 11', is filed with these minutes.

Members were of the view that despite problems with parking at City Hall the Panel should continue to rotate the venue of its meetings in order to make them accessible to the public.

A Member suggested that work needed to be carried out to publicise the work of the Police and Crime Panel and raise awareness that the meetings were taking place.

RESOLVED:

That the Panel continue to hold 2 of its 6 standard meetings per year at City Hall, Leicester.

11. Independent Members of the Police and Crime Panel.

The Panel considered a report of the Head of Democratic Services concerning the appointment and term of office of the Panel's independent co-opted members. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 10", is filed with these minutes.

(Mrs. Carter having declared a personal interest which might lead to bias in the matter, left the meeting during consideration of this item.)

Members were of the view that having two independent members was adequate given the current makeup of the Panel however the independent Panel members needed to be more representative of all those who lived and worked in the communities in the force area.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the term of office of the current independent members Colonel Robert Martin and Mrs Helen Carter be terminated as of 31 December 2017;
- (b) That a new recruitment process be carried out immediately to recruit two independent members for a 4 year term beginning in January 2018;
- (c) That the Appointment Panel comprise of 3 Panel Members; one from Leicester City Council, one from Rutland Council, and one from the county of Leicestershire;
- (d) That the Terms of Reference of the Panel be amended to reflect that the term of office of Independent Members would no longer be coterminous with that of the PCC.

12. Date of future meetings.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That future meetings of the Panel would take place on the following dates all at 1:00pm:

Tuesday 5 December 2017;
Wednesday 31 January 2018;
Wednesday 28 March 2018;
Friday 8 June 2018;
Wednesday 25 July 2018;
Wednesday 19 September 2018;
Wednesday 12 December 2018.

- (b) That an additional meeting be arranged for February 2018 in case the Panel is required to consider a revised Precept.

10.00 am - 12.05 pm
03 October 2017

CHAIRMAN