

Minutes of a meeting of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel. held at County Hall, Glenfield on Tuesday, 12 March 2024.

PRESENT

Mrs D. Taylor CC (in the Chair)

Cllr. Nags Agath
Cllr. Liz Blackshaw
Cllr Adam Clarke
Cllr. Sarah Cox

Cllr. Les Phillimore
Cllr. Sarah Russell
Cllr. Andrew Woodman

In attendance

Rupert Matthews – Police and Crime Commissioner
Rani Mahal – Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner
Rob Nixon – Chief Constable
Claire Trewartha – Chief Executive, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

21. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2024 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

22. Public Question Time.

There were no questions submitted.

23. Urgent items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

24. 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.

25. 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 on the agenda for the meeting.

26. East Midlands Special Operations Unit

The Police and Crime Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) which gave an update on the East Midlands Special Operations Unit (EMSOU). A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 7', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussions the following points were noted:

- (i) EMSOU tackled specialist areas of serious and organised crime such as fraud, economic crime, online crime, and carried out covert operations.
- (ii) In 2021 and 2022, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspected EMSOU with regards to serious and organised crime. In March 2023 HMICFRS published a report which found EMSOU's activity on tackling serious and organised crime to be inadequate. Many of the Police Forces involved in EMSOU now had different Chief Constables to when the inspection was carried out. A reconfiguration of the EMSOU operating model would be taking place from 2025/26 onwards and HMICFRS would be consulted on all the changes. Chief Constable Rob Nixon of Leicestershire Police was leading on the review of the operating model for the whole of EMSOU. It was not known when HMICFRS would next inspect EMSOU, however HMICFRS had recently inspected the individual forces that were part of EMSOU with regards to Serious and Organised Crime and Leicestershire Police had been graded 'Outstanding'.
- (iii) The financial plan for EMSOU was not considered to be stable and sustainable and therefore more funding was required to allow EMSOU to continue with the same level of activity.
- (iv) The PCC thanked Chief Constable Nixon and Assistant Chief Constable Michaela Kerr for their work on EMSOU.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the report be noted;
- (b) That the PCC be requested to provide a further report to the Panel on EMSOU when progress has been made with the improvements.

27. Police and Crime Commissioner's Update.

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

Arising from discussions the following points were noted:

- (i) The Panel welcomed the additional detail in the report particularly around how the information received from the public was acted upon by the PCC and the Force.
- (ii) At the Panel meeting on 1 February 2024 the PCC had indicated that he was to have a meeting with the Home Secretary prior to the March 2024 budget to discuss Police funding. However, the PCC now reported that the meeting with the Home Secretary had not yet taken place and he was not sure when it would be rearranged for. It was now likely that the meeting would take place after the PCC elections with whoever was PCC at that time. The Panel was reminded that the Home Office had indicated an intention to revise the Police funding formula but this had been delayed.

- (iii) The Home Office had informed the PCC that the previously awarded Safer Streets funding would have a reduction of £180,000 in year two, across all bids. Therefore, the PCC had decided that the funding for Project 2 - ASB in Melton, and Project 3 - Neighbourhood Crime Oadby and Wigston would have to be cut. The Home Office had not given a specific reason for the funding reduction and the PCC had not been consulted prior to the cuts being made. It was assumed that the funding reduction was part of general savings being made across government departments. The cut was not specific to the Leicestershire Police force area; Safer Streets funding had been cut across the country, though the PCC did not know if the funding had been cut by the same percentage across the country. Panel members expressed disappointment at the lack of explanation from the Home Office and emphasised the need to understand why decisions were made.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

28. Police and Crime Plan Delivery.

The Police and Crime Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) which provided an update on progress with delivery of the Police and Crime Plan. 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 explained that his original Police and Crime Plan covered a 4 year period, but as his term of office had been reduced to 3 years due to the Covid-19 pandemic, he had one year less to implement the Plan, and some aspects of the Plan required more than 3 years to come to fruition.
- (ii) The PCC emphasised the value of the role played by Special Constables and stated that public awareness of their value needed to be increased.
- (iii) Reported crime for January 2024 compared to January 2023 had seen the following reductions:
- Harborough and Wigston down 3.7%;
 - City Centre down 7.1%;
 - East Leicester down 6%;
 - Hinckley and Blaby down 3%;
 - Charnwood down 5.4%;
 - Melton and Rutland down 10%;
 - West Leicester down 7%.
- (iv) The PCC paid tribute to all the work that was taking place in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to reduce crime, particularly violent crime, and he praised the impact of the Violence Reduction Network.
- (v) In response to a query about differences in crime levels across the different areas of LLR the PCC provided reassurance that trends were monitored and the data was used to hold the Chief Constable to account. CSPs were provided with detailed figures for crime in their areas.

- (vi) Rural crime had previously been an issue in the Force area and Leicestershire Police had received some criticism from rural businesses with regards to how it was handled. However, work had taken place to tackle the issue. There was now more confidence to report crime in rural areas, and actual incidents of rural crime had reduced.
- (vii) In response to a question from a Panel member, the PCC stated that he supported the work of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and he spent a lot of time engaging with them. The CSP funding formula had changed a year previously and the PCC was waiting to see the results of this before making any further changes. In the view of the PCC, further change and clarity was required with CSP funding but this would have to wait until after the PCC elections in May 2024. Panel members thanked the PCC for revising the funding formula for CSPs and for taking their concerns onboard.
- (viii) A member raised concerns about how onerous the process for reporting crimes online was, particularly all the personal information that was requested that was not specifically relevant to the crime/incident that was being reported. The member asked what the abandonment rate for online reporting was. In response the PCC explained that there were regulations that covered crime reporting and some of the information collected was mandatory whilst some of it was down to local discretion, however he agreed to look into the matter further and provide a report to a future meeting of the Panel on the topic including the abandonment rate.
- (ix) Leicestershire Police had uplifted its Taser training, and Tasers would be available for every officer who wanted to carry one and who had successfully completed the training. The PCC had also committed to equipping all Special Constables who were willing and able to do so to carry Tasers as long as they had passed the training.
- (x) A member expressed disappointment that Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) were trained to use speed guns but could not issue a Fixed Penalty Notice as a result of the speed measurement they had taken. In response the PCC explained that this was an operational decision that had been taken by the Chief Constable and the PCC held the Chief Constable to account for the results rather than the way the results were achieved. It was further explained that the role of the PCSO was different to that of a Police Officer in that PCSOs engaged with communities and listened to local concerns about speeding in an area and ascertained if there was an issue. Then further action could be taken by the Force. The College of Policing was reviewing the role of PCSOs.
- (xi) In summer 2023 the PCC had commissioned an independent large scale public survey to gain the views of residents across LLR and understand the expectations and views of policing across LLR. In response to a request, it was agreed that the findings of the survey would be circulated to members after the meeting.
- (xii) A member welcomed the strategic objectives set out in the appendix to the report though asked for more detail on why some of the objectives were RAG rated amber and some were green. The member raised concerns that the RAG rating by itself gave insufficient assurance that progress was being made. In response it was explained that the RAG rating reflected progress at that current point in time and for some of the objectives, plans were in place to deliver the objectives but the plans

had not been implemented yet. It was agreed that future reports would contain more detail on the reason for the RAG rating.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the report be noted;
- (b) That the PCC be requested to provide a report for a future meeting of the Panel regarding the online method of reporting crimes.

29. Ethics and Transparency Panel.

The Police and Crime Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner which provided an update on the work of the Ethics and Transparency Panel. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 8', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussions the following points were noted:

- (i) The PCC thanked the Ethics and Transparency Panel members for their work.
- (ii) A Police and Crime Panel member questioned whether the Ethics and Transparency Panel had raised any concerns about any aspects of policing in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland and whether their work had any impact and led to changes. It was noted from the minutes of Ethics and Transparency Panel meetings that whilst the Panel asked a lot of questions there was no record of any actions being taken. In response it was explained that the Ethics and Transparency Panel was generally satisfied with the areas of policing that they had looked at and had not identified any major issues. However, it was agreed that a more detailed report would be brought to a future meeting of the Panel explaining the impact the Ethics and Transparency Panel was having.
- (iii) In response to a query as to whether the Police and Crime Panel could suggest topics for the Ethics and Transparency Panel to look into, the PCC asked that any suggestions be submitted through his office and he reassured that he would consider them and pass onto the Panel if appropriate. It was therefore suggested by the Police and Crime Panel that the Ethics and Transparency Panel could look at the inappropriate use of social media by police officers and that some dip-sampling could take place. The Panel also raised concerns about reports in the national media about inappropriate and offensive comments made by Police Officers in WhatsApp groups, but acknowledged that this was difficult to monitor. In response it was explained that these issues were covered by the new Code of Ethics which had been created for Leicestershire Police and the PCC was holding the Chief Constable to account for how the Code was being imbedded. However, the PCC would give consideration to whether this was a topic that the Ethics and Transparency Panel could get involved in.
- (iv) The PCC was in the process of recruiting people to be part of a Hate Crime Panel and the advert for the role had been published. The PCC felt that Hate Crime was such a serious issue that it required a Panel of its own. Police and Crime Panel members welcomed the PCC's focus on Hate Crime.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

30. Agreements under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

The Police and Crime Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner which provided an update on how the PCC and Leicestershire Police were implementing the recommendations that were given as part of the Police and Crime Panel Tasking Group review into monies spent under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 9', is filed with these minutes.

The Police and Crime Panel welcomed the progress that had been made with regards to Section 106. Panel members offered their support to the OPCC if there were any Section 106 issues in particular localities that needed to be resolved.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (b) That the PCC be requested to continue to provide updates at each Panel meeting regarding Section 106.

31. Date of next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the next meeting of the Panel take place on Tuesday 18 June 2024 at 2.00pm.

2.00 - 3.20 pm
12 March 2024

CHAIRMAN