

Minutes of a meeting of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday, 30 January 2013.

PRESENT

Mr. J. T. Orson JP CC – Leicestershire County Council (in the Chair)

Cllr. David Bill MBE	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
Cllr. J. Boyce	Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
Cllr. Colin Golding	Harborough District Council
Cllr. A. V. Greenwood MBE	Blaby District Council
Miss. H. Kynaston	Independent Member
Col. R. Martin OBE, DL	Independent Member
Cllr. Trevor Pendleton	North West Leicestershire District Council
Cllr. Byron Rhodes	Melton Borough Council
Cllr. B. Roper	Rutland County Council
Cllr. Sarah Russell	Leicester City Council
Cllr. Lynn Senior	Leicester City Council
Cllr. D. Slater	Charnwood Borough Council
Cllr. Manjula Sood, MBE	Leicester City Council
Cllr. Paul Westley	Leicester City Council

In attendance.

Sir Clive Loader, Police and Crime Commissioner
Simon Cole, Chief Constable

16. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 December 2012 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

17. Urgent items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

18. Declarations of interest.

All members of Community Safety Partnerships declared non-pecuniary personal interests in all matters relating to those partnerships.

Mr J T Orson CC, Cllr T Pendleton, Cllr B Roper and Cllr S Russell all declared non-pecuniary personal interests as members of the Strategic Partnership Board.

Cllr C Golding declared a non-pecuniary personal interest as he was a non-executive director of the Probation Trust.

Col R Martin declared a non-pecuniary personal interest as he was a trustee of Warning Zone, which was in receipt of funding from the Police.

Cllr M Sood declared a non-pecuniary personal interest as the Chairman of the Leicester Council of Faiths.

19. Police and Crime Commissioner's draft Police and Crime Plan and revenue budget and precept 2013/14 and medium term financial strategy.

The Chairman sought and received the Panel's agreement to considering the following papers as one item, as they were all interlinked:

- The Police and Crime Plan (paper B)
- The Police and Crime Commissioner's approach to the commissioning services (paper C and the supplementary paper)
- The Police and Crime Commissioner's revenue budget and precept 2013/14 and medium term financial strategy (paper D).

Copies of these papers are filed with these minutes. The Panel also considered comments on the Police and Crime Plan that had been submitted by chief officers and comments from Simon Galton, CC: copies of these are also filed with the minutes.

The Chairman welcomed the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and the Chief Constable to the meeting.

The PCC introduced his draft Police and Crime Plan, his approach to commissioning, his proposed revenue budget and precept for 2013/14 and his medium term financial strategy (MTFS). He emphasised that this was a first draft of the Plan, which was now the subject of a consultation that would end on 10 March. The final Police and Crime Plan would be issued once the responses to the consultation, including the comments of the Police and Crime Plan, had been considered.

The PCC emphasised that his aim was to improve the lives of the people in the Force area and to that end he had proposed an extensive range of priorities that reflected the breadth of his role. Improvement in performance would be achieved by rigorous challenge, coupled with use of accurate data. He accepted that the Plan, as currently drafted, could be described as two-dimensional and needed to include more on joint working and building strong partnerships. The final Plan, to be issued by 31 March, would be more three-dimensional.

In relation to Policing, the PCC explained that the new targets were focused on the areas of crime that mattered and were based on his manifesto and on what citizens expected of him. The emphasis was intended to be on the crimes that caused the most harm and the PCC recognised the importance of looking after the victims of crime.

The PCC referred to the County Council's questions regarding his commissioning intentions and pointed out that this was the largest fundamental change that had emerged from the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act (that had established PCCs and Police and Crime Panels). He spoke of needing to work with partners to understand what was working well and what was not and whether projects offered value for money. He reported that a lot

of preparatory work had been carried out by officers to understand and map the partnership and community safety landscape in the Force area; however, he was still not sure if all the relevant funding streams had been identified.

The PCC intended to treat the first half of 2013/14 as a transition period, offering the current providers of community safety services funding for the first six months, while he evaluated the schemes. The PCC explained that he had considered alternative arrangements but had come to the conclusion that to have passed all the funding over to the current projects for the year would not have fulfilled his legal mandate to demonstrate a clear linkage between his funding decisions and the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan and would have been too easy. To have stopped the funding completely until the evaluations had been completed would have risked seeing good initiatives fail.

The PCC went on to explain that one outcome of the Strategic Partnership Board workshop in January had been the agreement to establish four thematic or financial clusters: funding and reoffending; mental health and vulnerability; communities and neighbourhoods; and reducing crime and victim support. The first three were expected to be led by senior officers from partner agencies and the last by Simon Cole. He hoped to be able communicate the outcome of his evaluation of current providers of community safety services to the clusters by the end of June.

The PCC then turned to the Budget and proposed precept. He explained that he had attempted to be realistic regarding targets and resources and to bear in mind the possibility that decisions made in one organisation could have an adverse impact on another and might even lead to an increase in overall costs.

He highlighted the funding gap in his Medium Term Financial Strategy, which, if not addressed, could be as much as £20m by the end of the period. He hoped to be in a position by the end of June to inform partners and the public of the work streams to be put in place to eliminate this funding gap.

The full text of the PCC's introduction is attached to these minutes.

The PCC undertook to respond to the points raised in the comments from Chief Offices and Simon Galton within five days.

The following principal points were made during the discussions:

Police and Crime Plan

- i. The PCC and the Chief Constable were confident that sufficient resources were available to deliver all the policing priorities identified in the Plan. It was not therefore necessary to rank the priorities and the PCC did not consider it possible to state that one area of crime was more important than another.
- ii. The PCC expected to be judged at the end of his term on whether or not reoffending had reduced, as he considered this of overriding importance.
- iii. The Plan built on previous policing plans and did not, therefore,

necessitate significant changes to budget allocations from previous years to accommodate its priorities. The Chief Constable confirmed that there was a considerable degree of continuity in the budget for the police force.

- iv. The OPCC was required by law to have a Joint Audit, Risk and Assurance Panel (JARAP) to monitor the work of the office and the PCC. The interim JARAP consisted of four independent members, who had previously been independent members on the Police Authority. An advertisement would be placed in early February to recruit a total of five independent members to form the final JARAP.
- v. It was noted that partnership working had been key to the work of the Police Authority to identify and make efficiencies. The draft Plan did not appear to demonstrate a true commitment to continuing those previous levels of partnership working. It was suggested that this was a weakness and constituted a significant risk within the Plan; that the PCC needed to develop a vision about partnership working and what it could deliver; and that work could be undertaken on aligning priorities in different organisations. The PCC stated that he was committed to partnership working.
- vi. Members were pleased to see that a number of targets and performance measures had been included against the priorities in the Plan but were concerned at the lack of information as to how most of them had been arrived at or any indication that key partners had been consulted on them. It was noted that the policing targets were derived from targets in previous plans. It was explained that further work on this would be done through the clusters and that this element would be strengthened in the next draft of the Plan.
- vii. It was highlighted that there were no agreed governance arrangements or terms of reference for the clusters nor any dates set for future meetings of the overarching Strategic Partnership Board (SPB). It was not felt this demonstrated a real commitment to ongoing partnership work and that it would not be acceptable to some partners to have the clusters begin work before the SPB had had a chance to establish their terms of reference and lines of accountability.
- viii. There would be no incentives available to Local Policing Unit commanders to exceed targets and aim for the stretch targets: the PCC hoped to promote an environment within the police force that encouraged people to excel. The Chief Constable was confident his officers saw their role as vocational and would always want to make the force area a better place for all its citizens.
- ix. It was not considered that the Plan adequately reflected the needs and concerns of vulnerable people or the requirements and processes of statutory bodies, such as Local Safeguarding Children Boards and Safeguarding Adults Boards, which were the key mechanisms in any locality for bringing together all relevant organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of the local populations.

- x. There were only very limited references to the voluntary and community sector, which was a considerable oversight bearing in mind the amount of delivery work on community safety carried out through the third sector. There needed to be a more concerted effort to reach out and engage with these organisations, including during the consultation on the draft Plan.
- xi. It was explained that one means by which the funding gap in future years could be reduced might be to outsource services: no decisions regarding which services might be involved had been made but it would be areas such as Human Resources or Estates Management. It was noted that c.£8m was already outsourced for services including interpreters and cleaning; so the Force was reasonably confident it had sufficient expertise in this area.
- xii. The Plan did not contain sufficient focus on the Public Sector Equality Duty or the general equalities and diversity environment, with only brief references to a limited number of groups considered to have protected characteristics. This was a glaring omission in a region containing the most culturally diverse city in the country and the Panel was clear this area of the Plan needed to be strengthened. It appeared that an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) had not been carried out on the Plan and the PCC undertook to rectify this as soon as possible. He agreed to take up an offer from the City Council to review the EIA, when available, through its Budget EIA Review Panel to test its robustness.

Commissioning

- xiii. Considerable concerns were expressed by several members regarding the PCC's intentions to only provide funding to existing community safety projects and services for six months, while he considered their effectiveness. This would not allow sufficient time for partners to make adjustments and identify alternative funding to allow the work to continue or plan to close projects. The PCC considered that informing projects as to whether they could expect to be funded beyond September by the end of June would allow sufficient time.
- xiv. It was noted that projects that might well be considered worthy of continued funding would have faltered before that decision is made, as small voluntary sector groups found it difficult to maintain delivery while researching and applying for alternative funding.
- xv. The community safety and crime reduction landscape was a complex network of partners and relationships that had evolved over a number of years and had been instrumental in the reduction in crime levels in the Force area, that the PCC had referred to in his introduction. The police were generally only involved after a crime had been committed: it was organisations such as the Youth Offending Service, local projects, e.g. Impact, volunteers working with families, etc who had made the big difference in diverting individuals away from criminal activity. It was suggested that there

was a risk that the PCC's commissioning intentions, as described in the Plan, would destabilise this and that the PCC and his team needed longer than he was allowing himself to develop a proper understanding of this area of work, which could only be achieved in the first place by engaging with the relevant officers in the City, County and Rutland Councils and other partner bodies.

- xvi. Concern was expressed that many of the services related to community safety and crime reduction were dependent upon joint funding and were therefore vulnerable, in that the removal of funding by one agency could lead to similar action by others, or render those services no longer sustainable on the remaining funding.
- xvii. The PCC stated that he had a legal duty to ensure he commissioned services in line with the priorities in the Plan (once finalised) and he therefore needed to evaluate the existing services as quickly as possible to establish if they did contribute to the Plan's priorities and targets and if they did so in a manner that offered value for money. He confirmed that he had sufficient advice from procurement experts and that the professional advice he was receiving supported his position.
- xviii. The PCC explained that the position was not yet finalised and he would be meeting with all the chairmen of the Community Safety Partnerships in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland during February to discuss these plans further with them, as they had been responsible for most of the work in this area to date. He would also consider the points raised by the Panel and address them in the final Plan.
- xix. Work was being done to identify additional funding for commissioning community safety and crime reduction services.

Revenue Budget, Proposed Precept, MTF5

- xx. A national review of the funding formula for police forces was underway. Under the current formula, Leicestershire was penalised to the extent of £4m a year due to 'damping'. The PCC and Chief Constable were lobbying for the £4m to be reinstated, in recognition of the growth in population in the Force area.
- xxi. The need to start increasing the precept as from 2015/16 was recognised, as there was a substantial gap showing between forecast expenditure and forecast revenue. The intention to freeze the precept for 2013/14 and 2014/15 was noted (and that the OPCC had had notification of a council tax freeze grant for both years, which had not been the case for local authorities); however, it was highlighted that this would leave a lower base to add future increases to and this would, ultimately, make it harder to close the funding gap. Concerns were also expressed by some members of the Panel that they could not support a council tax freeze without seeing the detail on the likely efficiencies the OPCC and Force would be seeking to make.

- xxii. The change programme, that had already begun work, would establish what changes were necessary and the investment required that might be needed to produce longer-term savings, and how quickly the effects would be seen. The equalisation reserve would be used to cover any initial investment. The Panel considered that more detail was required and drew the OPCC's attention to the requirements on local authorities to make public details of services to be affected by savings or reductions and consult on them as representative of good practice.
- xxiii. Members suggested that the sooner savings could be found and made, the quicker the benefits would accrue. The PCC responded that it was important and prudent to take time to carry out a fundamental review of the budget and funding to enable proper planning to achieve a high quality product. The inconsistency between this stance and the truncated time being allowed to community safety programmes that were only being commissioned for six months initially was highlighted.
- xxiv. Funding for Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) was being absorbed into the main grant funding and could be expected to reduce at the same rate. A PCSO Reserve had been established, to manage this, alongside the withdrawal of Leicestershire County Council's funding for additional PCSOs in the County (as notified in February 2012). The Reserve would allow numbers to be maintained over the medium-term. The approach of Leicestershire County Council in providing significant notice of a phased withdrawal of funding to allow the OPCC to adequately plan was contrasted with the PCC's approach to funding existing community safety projects.
- xxv. Reference was made the PCC's pledge during his election campaign to maintain the cost of the OPCC, if elected, at or below the £865k that the office of the Police Authority had cost. It was noted that the budget for the OPCC in 2013/14 was given in Appendix 1 as £1,046,200. It was explained that additional costs had been transferred into the OPCC from the Force budget and that the PCC had responsibilities additional to those of the Police Authority. Costs had been kept lower as the PCC had decided he would not appoint any Deputy Police and Crime Commissioners.
- xxvi. The Police Headquarters at Enderby would be included in the review of the Force's Estates Strategy. It was noted that the football pitches were actually part of the flood plain, so was not land available for many alternative uses. The site was also used for activities such as fire arms and public order training. The Force was divesting itself of old premises but only when it could be confident of retaining a presence in the affected community.

In relation to the Police and Crime Commissioner's budget, proposed precept and medium term financial plan (paper D), it was moved by John Boyce and seconded by Colin Golding that the Police and Crime Panel:

- a. Note the information in this report, including the 2013/14 budget requirement at £173.446m and council tax requirement for 2013/14 at £49.153m.
- b. Support the proposal to freeze the Band D council tax for police purposes at £173.8750, the same level as for 2012/13.
- c. Note that any changes required by either Government grant alterations notified through the final settlement or through council tax base notifications received from the collecting authorities, will be balanced through a transfer to or from the Budget Equalisation Reserve.
- d. Note the current MTFs, the change programme and plans to identify solutions alongside development of the Police and Crime Plan.

The motion was carried, 10 members voting for the motion and four against.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the Secretary of the Panel be authorised to prepare a response to the Police and Crime Plan for submission to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, in consultation with the Chairman of the Panel, drawing together the comments now made and such other comments as may be received from Panel members;
- b) That the Panel notes that the Commissioner will be preparing a further draft of the Plan to take account of comments received during the consultation and agreed that it wishes to consider this further draft at a of the Panel in early March.

[Note: the response, as agreed by members of the Panel, is attached.]

- c) That the information in the report, including the 2013/14 budget requirement at £173.461m and council tax requirement for 2013/14 at £49.222m, be noted;
- d) That the proposal to freeze the Band D council tax for police purposes at £173.8750, the same level as for 2012/13, be supported;
- e) That the intention that any changes required by either Government grant alterations notified through the final settlement or through council tax base notifications received from the collecting authorities will be balanced through a transfer to or from the Budget Equalisation Reserve be noted;
- f) That the current Medium Term Financial Strategy, the change programme and the plans to identify solutions alongside development of the Police and Crime Plan be noted.

19A Police and Crime Plan

This item was considered under Minute 19 above.

19B Police and Crime Commissioner's approach to the commissioning services.

This item was considered under Minute 19 above.

20. Police and Crime Commissioner's revenue budget and precept 2013/14 and medium term financial strategy.

This item was considered under Minute 19 above.

21. Date of next meeting.

It was AGREED that a meeting be arranged for early March.

9.30 am - 1.00 pm
30 January 2013

CHAIRMAN