



Dorset Police and Crime Panel

Minutes of a meeting held at County Hall, Dorchester
on 7 November 2013

Present:

Members

Borough Poole

Co-opted members:

Phil Goodall
Ann Stribley

Bournemouth Borough Council

John Adams (Chairman)

Co-opted members:

Malcolm Davies
Dennis Gritt
David Smith

Dorset County Council

Fred Drane
Ian Gardner

East Dorset District Council

Malcolm Birr

Christchurch Borough Council

Bernie Davis

Purbeck District Council

Ali Patrick

West Dorset District Council

John Russell (Vice-Chairman)

Weymouth & Portland Borough Council

Geoff Petherick

Independent members

Iain McVie
Mike Short

Officer advisers to the Police and Crime Panel:

Andy Frost, Strategic Manager DAT & Community Safety, Dorset County Council
Adam Richens, Finance Lead Officer to the Dorset Police and Crime Panel, Borough of Poole
Fiona King, Senior Democratic Services Officer, Dorset County Council

Also in attendance:

Richard Bates, Treasurer to the Police and Crime Commissioner
Martyn Underhill, Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
Dan Steadman, Chief Executive to the Police and Crime Commissioner
Julia Yates, Head of Corporate Development
James Vaughan, Deputy Chief Constable

(Note: These minutes have been prepared by officers as a record of the meeting and of any decisions reached. They are to be considered and confirmed at the next meeting of the Dorset Police and Crime Panel on **6 February 2014**.)

Apology

62. Apologies for absence were received from Audrey Burch, North Dorset District Council and Judy Butt, Borough of Poole.

Code of Conduct

63. There were no declarations by members of any disclosable pecuniary interests under the Code of Conduct.

Minutes

64. The minutes of the meeting held on 3 September were confirmed and signed.

Matters ArisingMinute 61.1 - Questions

65. The member from the Borough of Poole confirmed that he had provided the Commissioner with a list of caravan issues to help him with this area of his work.

Quarterly reporting against the Police and Crime Plan

66.1 The Panel considered a report by the Chief Executive, Dorset County Council which provided background information on the development of the quarterly reporting format intended to give members the opportunity to explore areas of success in the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan and those that required further development.

66.2 The Commissioner's Head of Corporate Development presented his quarterly monitoring report to members highlighting performance on all the six key priorities.

Priority 1 - Reduce the number of victims of crime and anti-social behaviour

66.3 In response to a question from a member from the Borough of Poole regarding the high number of incidents in July and August, the Head of Corporate Development advised that a large number of visitors were attracted to the area and had made assumptions that this would have made an impact. Officers concentrated on trends and emerging issues and the small spike in the summer months was well within controls and noted that figures were now back to their usual levels. Plans were in place every year to reduce the spikes but summers in Dorset consistently proved to be an operational challenge.

66.4 One member from Bournemouth Borough Council highlighted the problem of graffiti within the Borough. The Commissioner advised that he had met with all the Chief Executive's to discuss this particular issue on a pan Dorset basis.

66.5 In response to a query from a member from Dorset County Council about the crime figures in the Purbeck area and the fact that police officers had been moved out of the area, the Deputy chief constable advised that the Force needed to reduce spending and officers were deployed where they were most needed.

66.6 Following a comment from one of the independent members that crime could not continue to fall and was there a plan in place to address this, the Commissioner made reference to his KCC (Keep Catching Criminals and Keep Cutting Crime) concept. In his view this was the very essence of policing, the prevention and detection of crime and would like to see a national focus on this from the Government.

66.7 In response to a question from the Vice-Chairman about the positive outcome rate of 25.5% and should members be pleased with this, the Commissioner advised that when he was first elected the rate was 21%.

66.8 The Vice-Chairman commented that he felt it would be helpful for members to receive the same information as that considered by community safety partnerships. The Head of Corporate Development advised that Dorset Police provided the community safety partnerships with all the data. The Strategic Manager for DAT and Community Safety, Dorset County Council advised members that the information presented to members was more of an overview to enable them to scrutinise the Commissioner's progress against his Plan. The information considered by community safety partnerships was more detailed and used by them to co-ordinate delivery against community safety priorities.

66.9 The Commissioner advised members that the Government had now allocated the funding for victims for the next three years. The Government had also allocated a considerable amount of money to continue the work on Restorative Justice and was looking to employ someone to drive this forward.

Priority 2 - Reduce the number of people seriously harmed in Dorset

66.10 For this quarter the PCC provided members with a more in depth look at Priority 2 – ‘Reduce the number of people seriously harmed in Dorset.’

66.11 One member from Christchurch Borough Council commented that the sanction detection rate appeared to have dropped dramatically. The Deputy Chief Constable advised that this was most likely due to the nature of the crime.

66.12 The PCC updated members on the introduction of body worn cameras for officers. These cameras had significantly increased detection rates of domestic abuse in the United States and he felt that they would have a significant impact on crime detection in Dorset. The Head of Corporate Development added that in all Forces, except two, there had been an increase in serious sexual crime reporting in the light of high profile media cases.

66.13 In response to several members' queries about domestic crime, the Head of Corporate Development advised that some alcohol related crimes would have a domestic element to it. Members felt it would be useful for public place crime to show whether they were daytime or night time economy offences. It was noted that Bournemouth Central and Dorchester were experiencing increases in alcohol related crime.

66.14 In response to a comment from a member from Dorset County Council about the price of alcohol in relation to crime, the Commissioner commented that he had supported the fixed price units for alcohol and the introduction of late night levies in Dorset but stressed the importance of making night time economies safer.

66.15 One member from Bournemouth Borough Council made reference to 'drunk tanks' and queried whether the empty cells in Poole could be an option for this. The PCC undertook to discuss this further with the Chief Constable.

66.16 The Commissioner advised members that the community speed watch programme for Dorset had started three months ago. 611 motorists had been written to as they had exceeded the speed limit and so far his office had received only five complaints in response.

66.17 The Commissioner continued that the programme had been trialled across Dorset but was now pan Dorset. He also noted that a pan Dorset road safety meeting with all Local Authority's was due to take place on 13 November 2014.

66.18 In response to a question from a member from Bournemouth Borough Council about statistics relating to alcohol in instances of people being killed, the Deputy Chief Constable advised that alcohol was a significant issue and was one of the key factors in killed and seriously injured road casualties. He confirmed that drugs were a factor although not a significant issue in this particular area. The key factors were alcohol, speed, phones and seat belts.

Priority 3 - Help protect the public from serious threats (local, regional, national) to their safety, including organised crime and terrorism

66.19 The Head of Corporate Development advised members that as the figures were low for this priority they would be reported at the end of the year.

66.20 In response to a question from a member from Christchurch Borough Council about asset seizing, the Commissioner advised that he intended to double the amount generated through seizure of assets. However, he went on to point out that at present the Police service received only 18% of any assets seized with the remainder going elsewhere.

Priority 4 - Reduce re-offending

66.21 In response to a question from a member from Bournemouth Borough Council about GPS tagging, the Deputy chief constable updated members on a trial. The pilot on voluntary tagging was due to start shortly. Evidence from other areas showed a 44% reduction in re-offending rates.

66.22 The Commissioner updated members on re-offending and expressed disappointment that Dorchester prison, as a resettlement prison, would be closing. Exeter would now be the resettlement prison for Dorset. The Government were currently reviewing the Young Offender Institution (YOI) on Portland and he was hopeful that in future Portland could become a resettlement prison.

Priority 5 - Increase people's satisfaction with policing in Dorset

66.23 The member from Purbeck District Council made reference to the '101' service and noted that she was still receiving complaints about the length of time to get a response.

66.24 The Commissioner accepted that this was still not good enough. Performance had declined in the Spring mainly due to a number of vacancies at the call centre. Resources had now been injected to try and address this issue and improve performance.

66.25 The PCC's advocate for Boscombe advised members that she had visited the call centre and was surprised at the level of the calls received, and noted that not one was a real '101' appropriate call. Managing public expectation was a key part of performance.

Priority 6 - Support neighbourhood policing that is appropriate for both rural and urban communities in Dorset

66.26 The Head of Corporate Development updated members on total resourcing which was a central control to move officers geographically to be located where they were needed.

66.27 In response to a question from a member from the Borough of Poole regarding the powers of Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's), the Deputy Chief Constable advised that they did not need specific powers to speak to young people or return them back to their parents if necessary. At present they would not be included in the pilot for body worn cameras, the aim was to keep them out of the evidence chain.

66.28 The Commissioner drew members' attention to his update on partnership activity and circulated a letter which had been sent from all of the South West PCC's to the Rt Hon Damian Green MP which expressed their concerns about the extra cost pressures being placed upon their budgets due to top slicing of budgets to provide funding for the IPCC (Independent Police Complaints Commission) and the Innovation Fund. The Commissioner

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confirmed to members that the letter had also been sent to all the local MPs and undertook to send it to all Local Authority Chief Executive's.

66.29 The PCC wanted to ensure that all members were aware of the additional financial pressures that had been placed on the Force. They were looking at losing £600/750k of their budget and had no say in the matter. He advised members that he would be raising the precept in February 2014 or he would take the freeze grant offered by the Government but added that if he was to raise the precept by 2% this would still not match the funding that had been lost. He had looked into the Referendum option but that would cost £1M.

66.30 In response to a question from a member from Poole about the £5 option that was given to certain classes e.g. the Fire Authority last year, the Treasurer to the PCC advised that as the Fire Authority was in the bottom quartile they were able to apply for this. This option was not available to the Commissioner.

66.31 The Commissioner advised members that he was due to meet representatives from Local Authority's, Probation and Police to try and get a multi-agency platform for safeguarding under way.

Resolved

67.1 That the PCC's quarterly update against his Police and Crime Plan be noted.

67.2 That the 'under the spotlight' item in the next Police and Crime Plan update report be discussed further at the members training and development session in December 2013.

Reason for Decision

68. To ensure the Panel met its duties to scrutinise decisions made, or other actions taken, by the Police and Crime Commissioner in connection with the discharge of the Commissioner's functions.

Station Desk Closures

69.1 The Panel considered a report by the Commissioner which informed them of the initial proposals for changes to the Enquiry Office provision and the stakeholder engagement currently being undertaken. Members were advised that the Enquiry Office Stakeholder Engagement process was essential in obtaining views from all relevant parties and the final decision was dependent on feedback received through the engagement process.

69.2 The Chairman made reference to a number of hubs that had been set up in other counties which incorporated health, libraries, police etc. One member from Bournemouth Borough Council noted that there was a hub up and running in Kinson that would welcome the Police joining them.

69.3 The Deputy Chief Constable advised members that there was a lot of consultation from a number of councillors at present regarding the sharing of properties. Enquiry office provision was a very under used service for the cost and it was important to find new and efficient ways of providing this service. The consultation was due to end on 29 November 2013.

69.4 One member from East Dorset District Council expressed concern that members of the public were not really aware of the ongoing consultation and it would be helpful to receive clarification especially in relation to the future of the East Dorset HQ.

69.5 The Deputy Chief Constable advised members that if the feedback from the consultation was so overwhelming officers would have to review the proposals. As the consultation was still open he was unable to give any further clarity but noted that the Police estate did need to be rationalised.

69.6 The member from Purbeck District Council advised members that Swanage Police station was now held in the Town Council offices and was working very well. It was important to make the public aware that they were not losing the service just closing a building, communication was key.

69.7 The Commissioner commented that there were currently 12 different proposals for shared buildings across Dorset. For example, as a result of working in partnership with Bournemouth Borough Council, he hoped to have a multi-agency hub in the centre of Boscombe in the near future.

69.8 One of the independent members felt that hubs were a good way forward, people may feel more comfortable to be seen walking into a community place rather than a police station.

69.9 In response to a question from the Vice-Chairman about the production of certain documents to the Police, the Deputy Chief Constable noted that more and more people now carried their documents e.g. driving licence with them, but that a lot of this work was now available on-line, it was about doing business differently.

69.10 One member from the Borough of Poole noted that further information on the opening hours of particular offices would have been useful.

69.11 The Chairman felt it was important to ensure that people were able to get to a police station within a reasonable time in respect of public transport.

69.12 In response to a question from member from Christchurch Borough Council about Verwood Police Station remaining even though it showed in the Commissioner's report high costs and low numbers, the Deputy Chief Constable advised that it was proposed to be kept but on a much reduced basis.

Noted

PCC Advocate – Boscombe

70.1 The Commissioner introduced Mrs Helene Bowman-Browne to members and advised that he had now officially appointed her as his PCC Advocate for the Boscombe area.

70.2 Mrs Bowman-Brown provided support to the PCC by working on community issues and would help the PCC to drive ideas forward. This was an unpaid voluntary role.

70.3 The Commissioner explained to members that Mrs Bowman-Brown would play a pivotal role in helping to cut crime and anti-social behaviour. Her role was to act as his eyes and ears and to support his work in Boscombe.

70.4 Mrs Bowman-Browne advised members that she attended all local community meetings and fed-back all comments from the meetings to the Commissioner.

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She continued that there would be other advocates appointed shortly, a Polish one and a number of older people advocates.

70.5 In response to a question from a member from Christchurch Borough Council about contact with ward councillors, Mrs Bowman-Browne confirmed that she was in contact with them on a regular basis.

70.6 One member from Bournemouth Borough Council commented that Mrs Bowman-Browne carried out her role very effectively.

70.7 Following a question from the Vice-Chairman about surveillance and vehicle licence plate recognition data, the Deputy chief constable advised that it would be ideal to have a database, which held all relevant information in one place, but this was a huge piece of work. The collection of public CCTV data was easier to manage.

Noted**Dates of Future Meetings and Programme of Future Business**

71. The Panel considered and agreed its work programme for remainder of the year 2013 and for 2014.

Resolved

72.1 That the next meeting of the Panel be held on Thursday 12 December 2013 at 10.00am and will be a training and development session for all members.

72.2 The dates for future meetings be agreed as follows:

- Monday 13 January 2014, 10.00am, Finance Workshop for all members
- Thursday 6 February 2014, 10.00am
- Friday 21 February 21014, 10.00am (Reserve date)
- Thursday 5 June 2014, 10.00am
- Thursday 11 September 2014, 10.00am
- Monday 10 November 2014, 10.00am
- Thursday 11 December 2014, 10.00am, Training and Development session for all members
- TBA January 2015, Finance Workshop for all members

Questions

73. No questions were asked by members.

Meeting Duration: 10.00am - 1.00pm