



Dorset Police and Crime Panel

Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ on Thursday, 4 February 2016

Present:

John Adams (Chairman) (Bournemouth Borough Council)
Mike Short (Vice-Chairman) (Independent)

Bernie Davis (Christchurch Borough Council), Norman Decent (Bournemouth Borough Council), Bobbie Dove (Bournemouth Borough Council), Francis Drake (Weymouth and Portland Borough Council), Fred Drane (Dorset County Council), Phil Eades (Borough of Poole), Ian Gardner (Dorset County Council), Andrew Kerby (North Dorset District Council), Barbara Manuel (East Dorset District Council), Mohan Iyengar (Borough of Poole), Iain McVie (Independent), Bill Pipe (Purbeck District Council), John Russell (West Dorset District Council) and David Smith (Bournemouth Borough Council)

Officers Attending:

Debbie Ward (Chief Executive, Dorset County Council), Mark Taylor (Group Manager - Governance and Assurance, Dorset County Council), Adam Richens (Finance Officer, Borough of Poole) and Fiona King (Senior Democratic Services Officer, Dorset County Council).

Also in attendance

Martyn Underhill (Police and Crime Commissioner), Colin Pipe (Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner), Richard Bates (Chief Financial Officer), Dan Steadman (Chief Executive to the PCC) and Debbie Simpson (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 to be held on **Friday, 10 June 2016.**)

Apologies for Absence

1 An apology for absence was received from Ann Stribley (Borough of Poole).

Code of Conduct

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

The two Independent members advised the Panel that for the item on the agenda relating to the Appointment of Co-opted Independent Members they would leave the meeting.

Minutes

3 The minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2015 were confirmed and signed.

Matters Arising

Minute 71.2, 71.4 and 71.9 – Progress against the Police and Crime Plan (Quarter 2)

Following a question from the Chairman about the improvement in the confidence in the data that was provided, the Chief Constable advised that the capturing of the repeat victimisation data was not quite satisfied and there remained a caveat on all documents but advised that this would be removed by the end of this quarter.

The Panel champion for mental health advised he was still awaiting a response with regards to mental health training and the Chief Executive to the OPCC undertook to follow this up.

In relation to cyclists, cycle paths and enforcement members were advised that a new protocol would be published shortly.

Representations to the Joint Committee

4 Public Speaking

There were no public questions received at the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 21(1).

Mr Patrick Canavan addressed members of the Panel in accordance with Standing Order 21(2) in relation to the item the Appointment of Co-opted Independent Members. He felt that the paper failed to consider other options that were available to the Panel in this regard. He also felt that the suggested timetable failed to take into account the election in May where any new PCC might wish to review the structure of the Panel or to increase the number of co-opted members. He added that members might wish to completely change the way in which members of the public could become involved in decision making and scrutiny. Mr Canavan's statement invited members of the Panel not to take any steps which would restrict any new PCC from making adjustments to the existing arrangements.

The Chairman thanked Mr Canavan for his statement. He advised that the purpose of the Panel was to act as the formal scrutiny mechanism for the PCC and therefore it was not for the PCC to determine either the structure of the Panel or those representatives who were appointed to serve upon it. The statutory role of the Panel was established in legislation, as set out in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, Schedule 6 – Part 2 (Paragraph 4 membership and status) of these regulations and set out the specific representation requirements that local authorities must meet when formulating a Panel. He concluded that although brief reference to the forthcoming PCC election was included in the timetable this was for information only and had no direct impact or influence on the duty to ensure that the panel was properly constituted.

Petitions

There were no petitions received in accordance with the County Council's petition scheme at this meeting.

Complaints update

5 Members' attention was drawn to a letter from the Home Office regarding the public consultation on proposals for Police and Crime Commissioners complaints and asked members to forward any comments they wished to make on the three specific areas to the Clerk by Thursday 11 February 2016 when a formulated response would be prepared and sent.

In respect of a revised Complaints Protocol members were advised that this would be ready for members to consider at their meeting on 10 June 2016.

Noted

Appointment of Co-opted Independent Members

6 (Independent Members - Mike Short and Iain McVie left the meeting for this item)

The Panel considered a report by the Chief Executive, Dorset County Council, which outlined the options for the recruitment of co-opted independent members of the Police and Crime Panel, including the possible establishment of a Selection Panel to shortlist and interview candidates.

Following a question from a member from the Borough of Poole about further options that might be available the Chief Executive, Dorset County Council, advised that the regulations stated a minimum of 2 independent members should be appointed and that to appoint further members would require a revision to the constitution of the Panel. One member from Bournemouth Borough Council noted that at present the Panel had 2 very qualified and skilled independent members and that in some instances quality was better than quantity.

In response to a comment about the number of members on the Panel, the Group Manager Governance and Assurance, Dorset County Council, advised that at present the agreed membership was for 15 local authority members and for 2 independent co-opted members. The report for consideration by the Panel at its meeting today was to specifically address the legislative requirement for the Panels membership to include 2 independent co-opted members as their current terms of office would expire in May 2016. Any changes to the structure of the governance would need to be looked at in line with the structure of the Panel and he undertook to produce a follow up paper to explore further options to the Panel's next meeting in June, following the PCC election.

Resolved

1. That the current term of the two Co-opted Independent members be extended for a further 4 years.
2. That a further report would be presented to the Panel at its meeting in June setting out the options available to the Police and Crime Panel.

Reason for Decision

1. To ensure that the Panel had the appropriate balance of skills, knowledge and experience and its constitution met the legislative requirements.

Proposed Precept for 2016-17

7 The Panel considered a report by the Treasurer to the Police and Crime Commissioner which set out the proposed 2016-17 precept for the Police and Crime Commissioner for Dorset.

The Treasurer advised members that the provisional settlement had been received and noted that the final settlement was not expected until after the notification to the Panel of the PCC's proposed precept but there was no indication that the funding position would change.

The Commissioner set the financial context by highlighting the changes in formula funding and the cost pressures facing the Police in 2016/17. He also shared with member's feedback from the public consultation on the precept proposals which showed 82% in favour of an increase. He also advised members of the Panel that future increases would be necessary, in order to maintain policing services. He also highlighted that there was no freeze grant available for 2016-17 and that when the provisional financial settlement announcement had been made the Home Secretary had written to confirm her view that in order to protect police funding there was an expectation of a rise in the precept, to protect policing budgets.

The Commissioner addressed members prior to taking any questions and his opening address is attached as an Annexure to these minutes.

Members of the Panel asked the following questions to the Police and Crime Commissioner, who responded accordingly:

- 1) Bearing in mind that before any consideration of the impact of the proposed 1.97% precept increase, Police Officer numbers have reduced by 4% (1,221 down to 1,177 – section 4.5 of Appendix 2), can the Commissioner explain why there has been this reduction in numbers and what has happened to the 2015/16 base budget funding for these posts.**

In order to meet the budget constraints in 2016/17 significant savings have already been achieved - over £6m. Whilst fully appreciating the Government's approach to protecting police funding, there has still been a reduction in central grant, an increase in National Insurance, pay and price inflation and reductions in specific grant funding. Every effort has been made to mitigate this reduction. However there has still been a net reduction of 44 posts. This reduction relates to two specific areas.

Firstly, to posts funded through the Dedicated Security Post Grant. We are still awaiting notification of the grant for 2016-17 but we are expecting this to reduce by around £1m. We have therefore made a corresponding reduction in officer numbers of 22. The reduced grant may be phased over a number of years or be of a different scale to our expectations, in which case our assumption of 22 officers will need to be adjusted. The loss in officer numbers will be made through re-deployment and an adjustment to recruitment numbers.

The second element is due to savings arising from the Strategic Alliance with Devon and Cornwall Police. Business cases due to be implemented by the end of 2016-17 show efficiency savings of around 70 officer posts across the two forces and the Dorset share will be around 22 officer posts. Savings arising from this will contribute towards the overall savings target for the Strategic Alliance of £5.2m over the next 3 years.

- 2) In section 15.1 of the Treasurers report the Commissioner makes it clear that the £1m generated by a 1.97% Council Tax increase will be invested in the policing priorities referenced in the public consultation. Can the Commissioner outline how this £1m will be divided between the 3 main priorities and what outcomes the community can expect from such investment.**

The precept increase will go some way towards mitigating the extent to which the Force resources are required to reduce, while also allowing resources to be directed to the three priority areas set out in the report. The three priority areas of protecting vulnerable people, emerging threats and making contact require significant investment in officers and staff, as well as equipment, IT infrastructure, training, and other support.

The exact resource will vary in response to changing demand, as is the case in all policing activities. In broad terms however the £1m approximately equally across these three areas of the business:

- *Protecting Vulnerable People*
- *Dealing with Emerging Threats*
- *Improving Public Contact*

Protecting Vulnerable People

This funding will enable dedicated detectives and civilian investigators to work within our Public Protection Department and with our local partners to create a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and further invest in training and technology, disseminating best practice and rolling out national capability such as access to the Child Abuse Image Database.

Another area where there is less awareness but is equally damaging is the increase in child exploitation in drugs supply and their manipulation through dangerous drugs networks. Further investment, both direct and with regional and national agencies in both intelligence and disruptive tactics, is essential

Emerging Threats

This funding will be primarily aimed at combating Cyber Crime, including the ever developing threats arising from the use of new technology. The funding will enable:

- *Increase training and investment in tools to improve intelligence gathering.*
 - *Partnership with Bournemouth University.*
 - *Develop cyber security information sharing protocol.*
 - *Embedding nationally accredited digital media investigators in the Force.*
- *Purchase of latest equipment to deal with high tech crime, including storage and analysis facilities*

Making Contact

It is absolutely critical that our systems and processes enable the public not just to contact us but that we have the resources, risk management and expertise to deliver the appropriate response. The funding made available by the precept increase will allow ongoing development of web solutions, providing an efficient 24/7 means of contact and provide a means for the public to obtain advice. This will, over time, enable the resources within the Control Room to be better focused and more responsive to manage both the emergency and non-emergency calls that are received

We continue to interact at every level and need to invest to ensure that officers and staff have the right training, support and technology to meet the public needs. This will include the development of Apps to equip officers with mobile data functionality, development of protocols to facilitate estate sharing with partners and the continuous commitment to tailor training and briefings to address the public's expectations.

Following a supplementary question in relation to the body worn cameras, the PCC advised members that they had been delivered but the issue was with connectivity to the data cloud that sat above them, but confirmed that they should be online by the end of March/April and work was now ongoing testing the high speed database. The funding for the cameras was partly from the Police Innovation Fund and it did not include funding for the support of the digital evidence platform.

In relation to the 101 service, a member from Bournemouth Borough Council asked the PCC where he felt it was not performing. The PCC advised that a lot of work had been undertaken to measure performance within the 101 service and to try to address the abandoned call rates. He noted that 101 performance had increased and in the last six months had exceeded that of neighbouring forces. The Deputy PCC advised members of the difficulty with public perception in the past but improvements were

now being seen. The Chief Executive to the OPCC added that the accessibility of policing needed to increase and officers were exploring different ways of contacting communities which was really important.

3) As a Council Tax increase will deliver ongoing funding to the Commissioner can he explain if the commitment to the 3 main priorities will be ongoing or alternatively what will happen to this £1m funding in 2017/18.

The assessment of priorities is not a one-off exercise but a continuous process of monitoring demand, public consultation and national direction. This is supported on an annual basis by the National Strategic Policing requirements.

All I am able to say is that the three areas identified are priorities and in need of investment. It is highly likely that they will remain so for many years to come. However it is important to be able to react and respond to changes in order to minimise Threat, Risk and Harm.

Robust governance arrangements are in place to constantly monitor and, if required, redirect resources. Where this is a material change to the Police and Crime Plan then it will be agreed between the PCC and the Chief Constable.

4) Bearing in mind the Commissioner has only received a 1 year financial settlement and the indication from the formula review was that it is likely to deliver significant ongoing extra resources for Dorset Police, can the commissioner explain the extent to which he considered using reserves to fund these priorities in 2016/17 with the extra formula funding delivering the increase in funding level from 2017/18 onwards.

The first iteration of results from the formula review showed a net increase in funding for Dorset of around £2m. Following the consultation process, the second iteration showed a significantly reduced saving of under £1m, mainly due to the Area Cost Adjustment {which is a factor contained in the formula to reflect different labour costs across the country} being added back in. Even if that was the result of the formula review, changes were going to be phased in over 3 to 5 years, so the annual benefit would only be £200k to £300k. This would obviously have been very welcome but not of a level to significantly change our budget plans.

However, we are now facing a further fundamental review of the formula which could have completely different results.

Dorset Police has consistently made the case for increased central resources. In the past the inequality in grant funding was recognised with an increase of £4m which was immediately taken back through the national grant dampening mechanism.

The use of reserves to support the revenue budget is not something I would recommend without a clear view of how we would sustain the budget in future years. Once spent, the budget gap will increase the following year amplifying the issues we face. Dorset Police reserves have been and are calculated on a risk assessed basis to meet in-force events that could not be covered through the normal budget.

These events could be operationally focused ranging from extreme weather through to major crime or areas that affect our infrastructure, denial of access to a site. The balances are correlated to our Risk Register and regularly

reviewed through the audit process.

Using reserves to bridge the delay in implementation of a new funding formula was therefore not an option both due the timescales of any implementation and also the uncertainty over whether Dorset will even end up as a net beneficiary under the new formula.

*One final point is around our level of reserves. In the HMIC PEEL efficiency report published in October 2015 they stated “**As the levels of reserves the force has access to are among the lowest in England and Wales, it has limited funds to fall back on if the future savings cannot be found in time, or take longer to achieve than expected.**” Whilst we are content with our level of reserves and balances we would not be in a position to reduce them further to provide any bridging funding and if we did, would receive further significant criticism from HMIC.*

- 5) Bearing in mind that over £6m of original budget set for 2015/16 has been redirected by virements as part of the in-year monitoring, can the Treasurer please advise why he is confident that the estimates used in putting this budget together are robust.**

The Treasurer advised that virements were an essential part of any robust budget management process, allowing the flexibility required in dynamic services such as policing to realign funding to emerging demands throughout the course of the year. This will include the removal of in year savings, which can be redirected.

For example, during 2015/16, savings have been achieved which have allowed a virement to fully fund the £511k risk line, as expected in the original budget.

Other virements have allowed the realigning of the budget to better reflect the management information requirements – for example by separating out individual grant streams, such as the Victims Funding, to allow clarity, or by moving budgets relating to collaboration, such as regional forensic collaboration. Again these sorts of virements are necessary throughout the course of the year, and are not a reflection on the quality of the original budget.

However, the budgets for any year will of course always be based on numerous estimates and assumptions. When forecasting spend for over a year in advance this is inevitable. It is therefore occasionally appropriate to realign budgets to reflect this, whether to address increased charges, or savings that have accrued in the year in excess of the level expected.

I am, for 2016/17, as in previous years, confident that the budget preparation has resulted in robust budget estimates for the year ahead, based on all information available throughout the process.

- 6) Bearing in mind that £3.6m could be used to cover the 2016/17 precept proposal for 3 ½ years. Can the Commissioner explain the outcomes the community can expect from the £3.6m Workforce Change Earmarked reserve scheduled to be spent between April 2016 and April 2019.**

The Medium Term Financial Plan is underpinned by our work both internally and in collaboration both with our Strategic Alliance partner, Regional forces, other emergency services and the wider Public Sector.

Without the resource to meet the cost of change, we will be unable to re-engineer our services and deliver our challenging agenda. Whilst applying £3.6m directly to the budget would in theory meet the precept proposal for 3½ years; in effect it would jeopardise the achievement of £5m of Strategic Alliance savings, the net effect being an increased precept requirement of over 8%. After the 3½ years the original gap would still exist.

The Workforce Change reserve is designed specifically to address the significant organisational change required to enable the force to perform its required service with considerably reduced finances.

Change is being delivered in numerous ways – internally, through the ongoing change programme, including Smarter Systems and other substantial projects, through the Strategic Alliance with Devon & Cornwall Police.

Regionally we have submitted a bid for PIF funding to create a single ICT infrastructure and governance model. This is alongside continued development to existing programmes such as forensics, regional organised crime and back office services.

Locally we continue to work with our blue light partners, further investing in estates rationalisation and enhancing joint response through the LRF.

Nationally we are engaging with the Police IT Company and Criminal Justice partners to deliver truly integrated and national systems.

None of this can be achieved without investment.

All of this change comes at a cost, which can be capital investment, infrastructure changes, redundancies and other costs. Additional funding is therefore required in the short term to drive out significant on-going revenue savings.

It is currently expected that the Strategic Alliance, for example, will save in excess of £13m, of which £5m will be a direct annual saving to the running costs of Dorset Police. To achieve this ongoing saving, one off costs will be required in IT infrastructure, estate costs, and redundancy costs. The Workforce Change reserve will be used towards funding these costs.

- 7) Can the Commissioner please confirm that a net £2.7m (£7.9m minus £5.2m) is included in this budget to cover Private Finance Initiative payments, why a PFI Earmarked reserve is required and provide the panel with reassurance that he believes these payments represent good value for local council taxpayers.**

The PFI schemes covered both the provision of and the running costs of new buildings with a net present value when the contracts were entered of over £100m. As they were provided through PFI deals, government grant of £5.2m per annum is received in respect of them. The net cost is £2.7m for 2016-17.

The schemes were fully scrutinised by the then Police Authority, the Home Office, DCLG and the Treasury. More recently I invited the Treasury Task Force to review the value provided by both schemes with a view to reducing costs. This review provided no material recommendations, the effective conclusion being they continue to provide value.

An issue often misunderstood by the wider public is what happens at the end of the contract. All the PFI sites, five police stations, two Custody blocks and two hubs, revert to the ownership of the OPCC. At the time of transfer the PFI provider has to warranty the buildings for a further ten years to ensure the assets have been maintained to an acceptable standard.

The original business case showed significant net benefit to Dorset Police of providing the new facilities by PFI rather than funding through traditional methods such as borrowing which would have attracted no government support.

The use of sinking funds for PFI schemes is standard practice across the public sector. This is because the grant received from government is fixed for the contract period whilst the costs increase annually by inflation. The sinking fund is therefore used to smooth the cost increases, and is particularly important at times of reduced funding levels.

We have looked at the options for re-financing the schemes several times over the past 5 years but cannot get a better deal than was achieved at financial close. The schemes therefore continue to be very good value to the taxpayer.

8) Can the Commissioner explain why he has accepted £6.3m of savings from Dorset Police Force but it would appear no efficiencies have been made in the £2.034m cost of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. The indication being that a similar level of savings on the OPCC costs would deliver a saving of over £100,000.

Well firstly, the question appears to be incorrect. Just to clarify, the cost of staff to support the PCC is £680,000, so a pro rata saving similar to the 5% saving in Dorset Police would realise £35,000 not £100,000.

In the same way that Dorset Police have had to grow resources in places to meet emerging demand, so have the resources in the OPCC been increased flexibly to meet the demand of new statutory responsibilities that greatly exceed those of the Police Authority that preceded the PCC. The £2.034m funds managed by the OPCC cover a number of areas of expenditure such as the Community Safety Fund, other commissioned services and the Local Innovation Fund as well as the running costs of the OPCC itself.

Importantly, as has been explained to the Panel many times, additional resources are NOT funded from the budget delegated to the Chief Constable to run Dorset Police. They are funded through new funds direct to the OPCC from the Ministry of Justice and Home Office.

These additional funds allow the OPCC to support my considerable ambitions regarding:

- *The commissioning of victims services across Dorset*
- *Engaging with the public in an unprecedented and ambitious programme to continuously stay connected with the public (which has been recognised to be the best in the country)*
- *Facilitating the embedding of restorative justice best practice across the county*
- *Awarding and managing community safety awards through the Safer Dorset Fund*
- *Being a champion for victims through victims surgeries and influencing the criminal justice system*
- *Driving the mental health agenda to ensure better treatment for*

- *vulnerable people and reducing demand on policing*
- *Ensuring Dorset Police meets the new Victims Code*
- *Generating additional income through the Police Innovation Fund, partnership and sponsorship opportunities which would otherwise have fallen to the Chief Constable.*

Additionally, I have been determined to be transparent over and above his considerable statutory obligations in this regard. All staff costs are highlighted on the OPCC website and we have operated a clear policy that staff will not be “hidden” within Dorset Police budgets, and this transparency has been recognised with a recent national award.

Staffing within the OPCC is under constant review and post-election, there will be a natural opportunity to match resources with statutory demand and the PCCs ambitions and preferences of delivery. I have already put in place an independent review of the OPCC immediately following the election. If I am returned I will seek to involve members of the panel in that process. We must remember that any review must include four things:

- 1. Who the new PCC will be*
- 2. What the winning manifesto says*
- 3. What the resulting Police and Crime Plan says*
- 4. What the plans of Government are, the Home Secretary constantly alludes to increasing the PCC remit after May, indeed she is currently speaking about her ambitions in London as I speak. We wait to see what she says, but increasing governance in the Criminal Justice System, Fire, and Youth Offending Services, as well as expanding the direct role of PCCs in managing complaints, are clearly on her agenda.*

There will be further opportunity to collaborate more across OPCCs (which could see the Dorset OPCC grow to deliver services of course) but also the PCC post-will need to consider how additional emerging responsibilities will need to be met. It is important to note that with increased collaboration and responsibilities comes increased corporate governance.

Following a comment from the Vice Chairman that from a public perception they saw police numbers falling but OPCC numbers were increasing, the Chief Executive to the OPCC advised that there was some muddying between statutory responsibilities and PCC aspirations and to help delineate these roles there was a breakdown on their website about which roles applied to statutory functions. The emerging collaboration would press the need for governance but accepted it was difficult to get the message across.

Further to a question about the need to drive out savings and benchmarking, the PCC felt that they had looked at everything, outsourcing had also been considered across many areas jointly with Devon and Cornwall. Dorset Police were recognised as a lean force when the PCC was elected and the Strategic Alliance had been very useful in checking and then checking again. The Treasurer added that the back office costs were significantly lower than other forces.

Following a comment from the member from North Dorset District Council regarding CCTV in Weymouth, the PCC believed that this had now been preserved.

In response to a question from the member from Christchurch Borough Council regarding the progress of the sale of the Ferndown and Christchurch police stations, the PCC advised that there was no date fixed as yet but it was being managed by Christchurch Borough Council. The OPCC were fully engaged in the process and had agreed to part fund the CCTV move from the police station at Christchurch to the Civic

Offices to the tune of £72k.

In summary the PCC noted that the £1m saving from a £6m cut was not extra funding and he strongly believed that there was a need to invest in people and systems for the future. He also reminded members that he had received the highest precept response from members of the public to anywhere else in the country.

It was agreed to hold a recorded vote on the recommendations in the Treasurer's report. Members voted unanimously to support the 1.97% rise in precept for 2016-17 and accepted the council tax requirement and the basic amount of council tax for police purposes in Dorset for 2016-17 as detailed in the Appendix 1 of the Commissioner's report.

Resolved (Unanimous)

1. That the increase in the precept of 1.97% for 2016-17 be supported.
2. That for the purposes of issuing a report to the Commissioner on the proposed precept, the Panel endorsed the council tax requirement and the basic amount of council tax for police purposes in Dorset for 2016-17.

Reason for Decisions

1. The Police and Crime Panels (Precepts and Chief Constable Appointments) regulations 2012 required the Police and Crime Commissioner to notify the panel of their proposed precept for 2016-17 by 1 February 2016. This then needed to be considered by the Police and Crime Panel who could either approve the proposed precept or veto it. A two thirds majority of the Police and Crime Panel was required to veto any precept proposal.

Progress against the Police and Crime Plan (Q3 - April to November)

- 8 The Panel considered a report by the PCC which informed members of the progress against the Police and Crime Plan and Priorities 2013 – 17 for Quarter 3. The PCC highlighted elements of performance against the Plan during this quarter.

The PCC provided commentary for members on a few key areas of activity and highlighted the priorities in the Plan. In respect of the Local Innovation Fund, the Vice Chairman noted that only £67k had so far been spent. The Treasurer advised that the majority of costs e.g. the funding for the Victims Bureau had not yet been recharged to that budget line. It was noted that the HMIC Peel report provided some helpful answers and he undertook to circulate it to members of the Panel.

Following a comment from the member from Christchurch Borough Council about the reduction in the rate of positive outcomes, the Chief Constable advised that the number of crimes had increased by around 14% and they were showing a positive percentage increase although there had been a reduction in the trend of anti social behaviour.

The Vice Chairman asked if there was a timeline in relation to the business cases for the Strategic Alliance work that was ongoing. The Chief Executive to the OPCC confirmed that everything had a timeline associated with it and projects were all mapped out. He highlighted the statutory consultation period in relation to staff changes and undertook to circulate timeline information to members of the Panel.

In respect of rural crime the Chairman highlighted that 39% of people were concerned for their safety, the Chief Constable advised that this was not evidence based but anecdotal. No issues regarding lighting had been highlighted and she noted that some rural communities felt they didn't see a police presence as was seen in urban areas. She accepted that the visibility of policing had an impact on the public's perception of safety.

One of the Independent member's drew members' attention to the issue of port security which the PCC had highlighted as a key concern and asked if there was anything the Panel could do to support him in this regard. The PCC noted that any help would be gratefully received, he had not received any response to the two letters he had previously sent and his primary concern was about the Border Force which he would again be writing about the following week, and undertook to send a copy to the Chairman of this Panel.

The member from North Dorset District Council congratulated the PCC on his success in the dramatic reduction of detainees held under the Mental Health Act. The PCC advised that street triage was now in place in 30 out of 41 Police Forces and that access to NHS records and Care plans was key to assisting the Police in dealing with mental health issues.

Following on from this the Mental Health Champion for the Panel highlighted the mental health implications of prisoners not being able to be sent to a prison in Dorset and the cost implications for family/friends to visit them. The PCC undertook to continue lobbying in this regard, he had been successful in several areas of lobbying but to date unsuccessful in this area. The Chairman, along with the Mental Health Champion for the Panel, undertook to write to the Lord Chancellor and local MPs to add the Panel's views on this and would also consider the merits of a carefully scripted letter to the press to try and bring this matter to the forefront.

Noted

Dorset Police and Crime Panel Work Programme

9 The Panel considered and agreed its Work Programme for 2016.

Members were reminded of the dates for future meetings as follows:

2016

- Thursday 12 May - Informal briefing session for members
- Friday 10 June 2016
- Thursday 8 September 2016
- Tuesday 8 November 2016
- Thursday 8 December 2016 – training session for all members

Noted

Questions

10 No questions were asked by members of the Panel.

Meeting Duration: 10.00 am - 1.00 pm

Opening Address from the Police and Crime Commissioner

Today's agenda item concerns a proposal to raise the precept and, as you can clearly see from the proposal paper and Appendix 2, the police budget is never clear cut. I will now lead you through the ebbs and flows that are contained within next year's budget.

At paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3, you will see the view from the Chancellor and the Home Secretary that a freeze in police cuts is dependent upon the PCC raising the police precept. It is important that we don't lose sight of the fact that unless the precept is raised by 2% year on year for the term of this Parliament, police funding will have been cut by 7%. It is equally important to understand that in the ebb and flow of this budget we are not talking about an additional £1m, we are actually talking about offsetting £1m from a £6m cut and using that £1m to deal with emerging threats. Continuing on the ebb and flow you will see at paragraph 6.2 that no freeze grant is actually available to us this year and at paragraph 7.3 an unexpected collection fund surplus has arrived. However, the collection fund surplus is then effectively removed by the increase in the single state pension.

Paragraph 10.1 reminds us that we need to find £6.3m savings this year and paragraph 13.2 highlights that we still do not know the outcome of the review of the funding formula - something that you know I was instrumental in starting with Government.

Notwithstanding that, I was very open minded about freezing the council tax policing element this year except for the three reasons that are clearly outlined in the paper.

And to sum those reasons up: firstly, the Government expects me to raise the precept; secondly, the Chief Constable, for the first time, has formally requested a precept rise; and, thirdly, under my statutory responsibilities I have consulted the public. Those consultation results show 82% in favour of a 1.9% increase. Significantly, we know from our summer consultation with thousands of Dorset residents the three priorities the public are most worried about are matched by the Chief Constable.

In summary therefore, before handing over to you for comments and questions, I come before you to seek your view on raising the precept by 1.97%. If you agree with my position, this raise will enable the Force to achieve savings of £5m next year, not £6m, allowing it to divert £1m towards the three reasons the Chief Constable and the public consider to be their priorities.

Never forget that I complete this term of office with a force that is debt free with adequate reserves, a force that has undergone the biggest IT change in its history and a force that stands and punches above its weight.

By managing the financial position of the Force, I have repaid the pension fund deficit resulting in one of the strongest balance sheets in the Service.

By improving the efficiency of the Force and releasing under-used assets, I have enabled investment in marine capability, rural vehicles, specialist operational technology (such as forensics, use of drones, hi tech crime). The legacy in-house systems of the Force have been or are being replaced with 'fit for purpose' applications that meet our collaborative agenda.

Dorset Police is one of the top performing police forces in this country. It is crucial that we invest in it to maintain that position for whoever is elected as Police and Crime Commissioner in May.

This page is intentionally left blank