



Dorset Police and Crime Panel

Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ on Friday, 3 February 2017

Present:

John Adams (Chairman) (Bournemouth Borough Council)
Mike Short (Vice-Chairman) (Independent)
Norman Decent (Bournemouth Borough Council), David Brown (Borough of Poole),
Bobbie Dove (Bournemouth Borough Council), Francis Drake (Weymouth & Portland Borough Council), Fred Drane (Dorset County Council), Ian Gardner (Dorset County Council),
Mohan Iyengar (Borough of Poole), Andrew Kerby (North Dorset District Council),
Barbara Manuel (East Dorset District Council), Iain McVie (Independent Member),
John Russell (West Dorset District Council), David Smith (Bournemouth Borough Council) and
Ann Stribley (Borough of Poole)

Officers Attending:

Martyn Underhill (Police and Crime Commissioner), Colin Pipe (Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner), Richard Bates (Treasurer to the OPCC), Debbie Simpson (Chief Constable), Simon Bullock (Interim Chief Executive, OPCC), Debbie Ward (Chief Executive), Adam Richens (Finance Officer, Borough of Poole), Mark Taylor (Group Manager - Governance and Assurance) and Fiona King (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

Also in attendance

Tim Morris, Purbeck District Council.

(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 **Thursday, 29 June 2017.**)

Apologies for Absence

52 Apologies for absence were received from Bernie Davis, Christchurch Borough Council and Bill Pipe, Purbeck District Council.

Cllr Tim Morris from Purbeck District Council attended the meeting as a substitute for Cllr Pipe.

The Panel welcomed the PCC back to his position following his short period of absence and acknowledged the Deputy PCC's cover and support during this period. The PCC extended his own personal thanks for the support that he had received from the Panel, the Deputy PCC and the wider team.

On behalf of the Panel the Chairman offered congratulations to PC Chris Smith on receipt of the Queens Police Medal for his work on road safety and asked the Chief Constable to pass on the congratulations and recognition of this significant honour.

Code of Conduct

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

Minutes

54 The minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2016 were confirmed and signed.

Matters Arising

Minute 35 – Strategic Alliance with Devon and Cornwall – The Chairman advised that an informal meeting had been arranged with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Devon and Cornwall PCP on 7 February 2017 to consider the merits and scope of any future joint working.

Minute 36 – The First 100 days in office – In response to a question regarding the meeting with the Home Secretary, the PCC confirmed that this meeting was focussed around fraud issues and border security was not discussed. He had however requested a further meeting but was still awaiting a response.

Minute 45 - 101 Service Improvement Panel – following a request from a member for a graph to show the percentage of skewed calls in order to see a true representation the Deputy PCC undertook to raise this with the Panel and to circulate outside of the meeting. With regard to the timing of meetings, the Deputy PCC advised that the 101 Service Improvement Panel meetings were now scheduled in line with other scrutiny meetings on a 3 month basis.

Minute 46 – Police and Crime Pan – Quarter 2 – The Chairman advised members that work would soon need to get underway to refine the quarterly monitoring reports and that a new format should be developed and agreed in time for the Panel's meeting on 22 September 2017. This work would ensure that the quarterly monitoring reports were shaped to support and improve data to enhance the Panel's scrutiny of the OPCC's impact and effect. Cllr Andrew Kerby and the Vice-Chairman, Mike Short, had already indicated a desire to take this work forward with the OPCC and with the support of officers.

Minute 47 – Police Overtime – In response to a question regarding whether the difference of £600k was up or down, the Chief Constable confirmed it had increased and whilst it was not bound to increase it was likely to.

Public Participation55 Public Speaking

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

There were no public statements received at the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 21(2).

Petitions

There were no petitions received at the meeting in accordance with the County Council's Petition Scheme.

Proposed Precept for 2017/18

56 The Panel considered a report by the Treasurer to the Police and Crime Commissioner which set out the proposed 2017-18 precept for the Police and Crime Commissioner for Dorset.

The Treasurer highlighted the cost pressures faced by the Force, the funding allocations and that savings of £3.9m were required to balance the 2017-18 budget. He noted that the overall position in that the Police Main Grant had been cut by 1.4% for 2017-18 which was a higher cut due to additional top-slicing for national projects. He also made reference to the public consultation on the precept options that had been carried out which had showed a clear majority in favour of the option of increasing Council Tax and using the additional £1.04m to fund various policing priorities.

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

The Chairman highlighted that the proposed increase would result in a £3.73 per week increase in council tax. He also set out the total precept figures for each of the respective council tax bands, which ranged from £129.72 (Band A) to £389.16 (Band H) per annum.

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

1. As highlighted in the report the Police Finance Settlement is for only one year 2017/18 whereas Local Authorities have been able to sign up to a four year finance settlement from Government covering the period 2016 to 2020. Can the Commissioner therefore outline the steps he has taken to lobby the Government for both a longer term settlement, which should enable the Commissioner to plan with more certainty, as well as a new police funding formula which Appendix 2 of the report (*section 5.5*) indicates should be worth up to an extra £4.4m per annum to Dorset Police?

Our written responses to the provisional settlement in both 2016 and 2017 have pressed for a multi-year settlement to be given for Police funding to aid with our Medium Term Financial Planning. The response back has been that the Home Office do not want to provide multi-year settlements whilst the new funding formula is being developed. On that front, we continue to lobby at every opportunity for the new formula to reflect adequately the policing needs of forces such as Dorset.

Following a question regarding whether any representations were being made for victims services to try and get funding for more than a year, the PCC advised that this was a different funding strand and agreed it was not ideal getting just one year's funding for this. In respect of top slicing the Treasurer advised that this was a Home Office decision

In response to a question about the ICT Police company system, the PCC advised that there were now 3 national programmes being rolled out and that this was a long term issue and not much had been delivered or changed in Dorset at the present time. The Chief Constable noted that what was offered indirectly was a gateway for forces before they purchase new ICT to ensure it fitted in with the national position. The Independent member felt this would be a good opportunity for them to explore this further with other PCP Chairs and to perhaps consider convening a sub-group similar to that of the 101 Service improvement Panel.

2. Can the Commissioner provide the Panel with reassurance that he considers the three quarters of a billion pounds being invested nationally across 2016/17 and 2017/18 in the Emergency Services Network will represent good value for the taxpayer and what the latest estimated of the overall amount which is being invested in this system and which is diverting much needed resources from front line policing?

Can the Commissioner also explain why Dorset Police will then be required to spend up to a further £2m locally on this project (Appendix 2 of the report section 6.11).

The PCC advised that this was a national project to provide a replacement for the Airwave System and will be used by 13 Ambulance Trusts, 50 Fire and Rescue Services in addition to the 44 Police Forces. In addition, it was anticipated that there will be around 300 other users all of whom will pay towards the on-going costs.

The replacement had been procured nationally and was a joint collaboration between the Home Office, Department of Health and the Welsh and Scottish Governments. As such, it has been through a rigorous procurement process and has had to meet the Government's VFM requirements. Given this, it is for the Government to provide assurances with regards to the investment, rather than myself.

Local Expenditure in relation to the project would be on required control room and network changes, device purchase and installation, project management and training.

It was anticipated that in the long run, the on-going costs of the new system would be significantly lower than the current charges.

3. Can the Panel be advised as to why there has been a 130% increase in the national top slice of the police force settlement (£76m to £175m as per table in Appendix 2 of the report section 3.6) by way of the Police Transformation Fund and clarify if there is an opportunity for the Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner to attract some of this funding to the County?

The increase to £175m incorporates both the existing transformation fund (£76m) and also the police innovation fund (£55m). Of this sum, £32m is being used for firearms. A number of other national projects will also benefit Dorset such as Specialist Capabilities, Forensics and Modern Slavery.

The remainder will be available for bids. Dorset will therefore be looking to bid for a share of this funding which could be individually, through the Alliance or as part of a regional submission.

4. As part of the 2014/15 Budget the Commissioner set aside resources as part of the £300,000 Local Innovation Fund for the purchase of body worn cameras and mobile devices. Can the Commissioner confirm he still believes this investment represented value for money for the Dorset Council Tax payer and inform the Panel when Dorset residents will see the benefit from this investment?

I have utilised the £300,000 to support the Force in its wider ambition in relation to both mobile data and body worn video.

I am absolutely confident that this is the right strategy to follow and if the Force is going to meet the many challenges we have discussed, it will need to exploit agile working to enable officers to maximise the use of their time, and provide the best service to the public.

Mobile data is not a single programme but is an array of devices deployed to support specific roles, thus enabling individuals to both deploy and work from the most appropriate location, be it supporting a vulnerable victim in their own home to remaining operationally in contact whilst attending a Police and Crime Panel.

Body worn video is already demonstrating its ability to effectively support both officers and the Criminal Justice system. Presenting video evidence can result in a much simplified process, when individuals are presented with video evidence it often results in speedier resolution, officers are better protected against the complaints made against them and investigations into incidents can be dealt with much more effectively.

The first phase of mobile data is in regular use and officers and staff regularly work at locations based on the efficiency of the task not the location of a police

building.

Unfortunately wide roll out and full integration with core systems was delayed due to the failure of the private sector to deliver. Needless to say I have not paid the failed contractor and have now engaged with a new contractor who has delivered the first devices (phones and tablets) which are being fully tested by the Force.

Body worn video also presents challenges, not so much in the device but in the protocols and data management. The funding has enabled an initial trial involving 100 officers to be rolled out, soon to be followed by full roll out to all firearms officers.

In terms of value then 'yes' absolutely to both aspects; additionally I can ensure the Panel that the procurement process itself has been subject to rigorous evaluation and is fully compliant with both UK and European legislation.

I am happy to provide more detail if required; however members may recall that this was discussed at a previous Panel at which I also provided examples of the equipment for members to view.

5. The Commissioner as part of the 2016/17 Budget increased the Council Tax precept by 1.97% to generate approximately an extra £1m which provided flexibility to increase resources dedicated to Protecting Vulnerable People, Emerging Threats such as Cyber Crime, and Making Contact easier for the public. As this £1m remains in the base Council Tax as part of the 2017/18 precept proposal can the Commissioner confirm that he will again be spending these extra resources approximately equally in supporting these priorities?

The Policing budget would always be directed to the areas of the highest priorities. As per the question, the funding raised by last years' precept rise allowed for investment around:-

- *Protecting vulnerable people*
- *Cyber Crime; and*
- *Making contact easier*

These remained significant issues and, so yes, investment in these areas would continue. The Force and the PCC would of course continue to re-assess priorities on an on-going basis and move resources as necessary in terms of Threat, Risk and Harm.

6. Can the Commissioner explain how he intends to balance the 14% increase in crime last year with the areas he has chosen to prioritise the 2017/18 precept resources towards, namely Vulnerability, Communities, and Victims, Witnesses & Offenders?

The 14 per cent increase was in line with national trends across England and Wales, with rises seen in most police force areas. According to the Office for National Statistics – recorded crime is “not currently a reliable measure of trends in crime with a large proportion of the rise considered to be due to continued improvements in crime-recording practices and processes.”

As a consequence of improved practice, the Force is publishing increases in total crime which is due to a greater emphasis being placed on accuracy. Dorset Police has worked hard to improve its compliance with the complex Home Office Counting Rules, and to ensure the public are confident to report crime. This followed recommendations made by HMIC around data integrity in

2014 and the rise demonstrates that the Force is fully committed to meeting the very high standards set out by the government.

The biggest rise for an individual crime was for "violence without injury" on which we have reported regularly to the panel. Crime in this area rose 67 per cent to 7,974 offences, from 4,772 the previous year. However, as seen in the detail of the report we are also seeing increased demand in safeguarding, child exploitation, cyber and cyber enabled crime and serious sexual offences.

If Council tax were to be raised in 2017/18, this would be invested in: Protecting adults at risk of harm, improving our response to common, non-emergency types of crime and continuing to embrace new technology, which are all important areas that will ensure the Force is able to respond to emerging trends and continuously improve.

7. Bearing in mind the £3.9m savings being delivered by Dorset Police (*Appendix 2 of the report, section 11.2*) through such process as the strategic alliance, can the Commissioner confirm what value of savings have been delivered from the cost of his own office to support the budget as proposed?

Part of the £3.9m savings had been delivered by the OPCC through the establishment of the joint Audit, Risk and Insurance team which now provided services to both forces and both PCCs.

The cost of the OPCC had again been held at the same level. This was despite the significant increase in the roles and responsibilities undertaken by the PCC and the office since its inception. Indeed, the Policing and Crime Bill would place even more responsibilities upon the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

To ensure that the office was suitably resourced and provided the best service for Dorset residents, an independent review of the office, as well as salaries, had been undertaken and a number of changes had now been implemented.

It was worth noting that while there was considerable scope for savings across the two forces – as you would expect from two organisations with several thousands of staff – there was not the same level of opportunity to exploit economies of scale across the OPCC which comprised of a small team and, through legislation, was required to have a number of separate posts and governance.

In response to a question about whether this restructure had cost any more than the previous year, the Treasurer advised that it had not.

8. Can the Treasurer explain why an adverse actuarial review on the Local Government Pension Fund used by Police support staff is passed on to the Dorset council taxpayers whereas a positive actuarial review on National Police Officers (24.2% down to 21.3%) is not passed on to local taxpayers? (*Appendix 2 of the report section 4.13/4.14*).

The Local Government Pension Scheme was a funded scheme with all costs borne by the employers and employees within the scheme, backed by the schemes assets. Any change in the value of these assets, compared to future liabilities, which were highlighted in the triennial valuations, therefore had to be borne within the scheme.

The Police Officer scheme, like all other public sector schemes except the LGPS was unfunded. Contributions were paid by the employer and employee direct to the government. The government then had to meet all of the liabilities

of the scheme. The government had therefore taken the benefit from a positive actuarial review to reduce these liabilities, rather than passing the benefit back to the employers in lower contributions.

9. Can the Commissioner explain why according to the Proposed Capital Programme (*Appendix 2 of the report, Appendix C*) he intends to spend £70,000 in 2017/18 on drones and how he intends they will be deployed?

The Force has already made use of the support I have provided and has two operational drones, qualified pilots and Civil Aviation Authority approval which is now being cited as best practice.

A number of police forces were currently exploring the use of drones, as they had vast potential in assisting the police. Uses encompass, but were not limited to, firearms support, road traffic collision investigation, crime scene analysis, intelligence gathering to support specific operations, missing persons searches to name but a few. Whilst the initial work had concentrated on ensuring the Force was compliant with all legislation and has trained officers in the use of the equipment, drones had already provided evidence to support criminal proceedings.

Moving forward Dorset would be working further with Devon and Cornwall and investing in further capacity. Trial were currently being undertaken to improve night flying capability, in-building searches, over water flying and prolonged flight times. The use of drones also ensured an improving knowledge base to address criminal use of drones.

Looking at the cost, whilst £70,000 was a significant capital investment, this compared with the cost of conventional air support that can be as high as £1,600 per hour.

10. Can the Treasurer explain how the £6.1m slippage in the capital programme between 2016/17 and 2017/18, according to the Quarter 3 report (*page 63 of the report section 3.19*), is shown in the proposed capital programme presented in 6.2 and 6.4 of Appendix 2 of the report?

The capital programme set out in the budget paper reflects the new budget requirements to fund the capital programme. Any slippage of the 2016-17 programme will be carried forward and added to these figures at year end. The long term nature of capital schemes will inevitably result in some slippage from one year to the next. The Q3 monitoring report details £6.1m of potential slippage between years which relates to relocation of various functions from Ferndown, the Smarter Systems programme of mobile policing solutions, the duty management system and digitalisation of speed cameras all of which are now planned for 2017-18.

In light of further slippage, a Panel member requested that the PCC specifically look into this in further detail as part of his review of procurement, which was scheduled to be reported to the Panel at its next meeting on 29 June 2017.

11. What areas are being scrutinised in order to improve efficiency and transform the way in which Dorset Police and the OPCC operates?

As reported regularly to the Panel, the Commissioner and his office scrutinise a wide range of the Force's business to ensure that Dorset Police is as efficient and transformational as possible. On a day-to-day basis this is achieved through attendance at Joint and Force Boards and via PCC Challenge.

Of particular note, is the key role that the OPCC plays in the Strategic Alliance – which has delivered significant cost savings, de-duplication of effort and increased resilience across the organisations. As the Panel has heard, the four corporation soles, no longer facing budget cuts as severe as first feared, have been able to prioritise service improvement, which will be achieved through transformation.

Members will be aware that Dorset Police was assessed as ‘Good’ in the recent HMIC Police Efficiency, Effectiveness and Legitimacy Inspection (PEEL) for Dorset Police. This provides independent analysis of the Force in many areas and to quote the report, “Dorset Police has clear plans, based on sound analysis, allowing it to determine changes to how it operates and provides services in the future. HMIC found evidence of the force working with other organisations to improve future efficiency,” and “the force’s financial and organisational plans are practical and credible.”

Members will also be aware that the Commissioner is currently consulting on the next Police and Crime Plan. One of the proposed pillars of this plan is entitled ‘Transforming for the Future’ and is under-pinned by a number of the Commissioner’s manifesto commitments, for example, taking on complaints, improving accessibility and investing in new technology. Furthermore, the PCC and Chief Constable will adhere to the Policing Vision 2025, which sets out the plan for policing over the next ten years. It will shape decisions around transformation and how we use our resources to keep people safe and provide an effective and value for money service that can be trusted.

12. What action is being taken to further improve the leadership and culture of policing and tackle new types of crime?

The Force was continuously improving its response to emerging crime types and the Panel will be aware that last year’s precept rise was invested in areas such as employing extra investigators dedicated to investigating child abuse and protecting vulnerable children; helping to create a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub to protect vulnerable people; increasing the number of officers in the cybercrime intelligence and investigation team and the recruitment of a dedicated cyber-crime prevention officer. If the precept is raised in 2017/18, this would be invested in protecting adults at risk of harm – another emerging trend.

Again, it was worth reflecting upon the Policing Vision 2025, which sets the plan for the service over the next ten years. The Vision recognised the need for police forces to continue to build a culture that valued openness and transparency; that standards were evidence based and that leaders were equipped for the future and had the skills and knowledge to succeed. It also recognised the way that PCCs and Forces must work together to support policing at the local, cross force and national levels. The Commissioner and Chief Constable were committed to this vision.

Following a question about the relaunch of the website and how success of this would be measured, the Deputy PCC advised that they were already seeing a greater volume of people contacting the OPCC via the website but it would be some time before it could be seen whether the service was improving or whether it was just opening up to people that had not contacted the OPCC previously.

In response to a question about how an ‘outstanding’ rating by the HMIC could be received, the Chief Constable advised that the ‘good’ rating allowed the Force to retain current resources and to look at efficiencies and at what areas could be more

effective, but she would not put resources into getting a better rating to the detriment of communities. She was hoping to maintain the 'good' rating.

Members voted unanimously to support the 1.98% rise in precept for 2017-18 and accepted the council tax requirement and the basic amount of council tax for police purposes in Dorset for 2017-18 as detailed in the Appendix 1 of the Commissioner's report.

Resolved (Unanimous)

1. That the increase in the precept of 1.98% for 2017-18 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 2017-18.

Reason for Decisions

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 2017-18 by 1 February 2017. 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.

Police and Crime Plan Monitoring Report

57 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 2016-17. 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.

Members of the Panel asked the following questions and received the responses below:

1. Paragraph 2.1.1 identified particular areas where Dorset's crime figures feature in the higher benchmarked statistics when compared to others (e.g. non-dwelling burglary; drug offences; theft of pedal cycles and theft from the person). Can the PCC provide some insight as to any specific local 'causes and forces' that contribute to drive these and what actions are being taken to focus upon them to reduce occurrence?

The Chief Constable advised that non dwelling burglaries were those away from properties and featured in seaside shed/dwellings. Dorset were 33rd nationally in reporting these type of break ins some Forces didn't report on this. With regard to pedal cycles this could be that a high number of people had confidence in reporting these type of issues.

2. Paragraph 2.1.6 – Anti Social Behaviour incidents have increased by 13% - What action is the Commissioner taking to better understand what is driving this increase?

The Chief Constable noted that the areas seen to increase tended to be in areas where population was highest and that a lot of the success was around good partnership working. The member from North Dorset District Council highlighted that it was also the duty of the relevant Local Authority to deal with anti-social behaviour through their community safety partnerships.

Following a comment from the Chairman regarding victim satisfaction and the frustration of people being able to hand things into and contact the police, the Chief

Constable advised that online capability was growing. Information was available online to tell members of the public what to do in relation to lost property etc and was an opportunity for people to make better contact with the Police. In respect of lost property the Treasurer undertook to advise members outside of the meeting of the amount collected through the sale of lost property.

3. Paragraphs 2.2.8, 2.2.10 & 2.2.11 of the report – The data shows that Domestic Abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation & Serious Sexual Offences are all increasing. Does the Commissioner agree that these are all useful areas for focused scrutiny work?

The Chief Executive to the PCC advised that there would be an opportunity in the next report to focus on the wider work.

4. Can the Commissioner outline why the Support Services spend to date for Q2 was £2.9m, yet for Q3 it is shown as £436k? There is no reflection of this change in the virements table.

Spend to date figures are always a snapshot at a point in time of expenditure incurred to date. In the case of support services figures reported in Q2 the timing of these meant that known adjustments had not yet occurred, including recharging of some actual costs to Devon and Cornwall for Strategic Alliance and movement of expenditure from support services to the more appropriate operational area to which the expenditure related. Members will note that the projected outturn in Q2 was £280k, as our forecasting allowed for the forthcoming adjustments at that point in time.

5. Can the Commissioner explain why the budgeted figure for FTE Police officers is 1,200, yet para 3.7 of the report (p61) states that the force is forecast to have 1,236 FTE officers?

Workforce planning was based on three-year forecasting between the Force's Human Resources and Finance departments. Finance budgeted for a predicted turnover of 100 officers at all ranks for financial year 16/17. Of course, this can vary year-to-year and turnover has, however, been lower than anticipated with a predicted 82 leaving officers at the end of this financial year. With the increased recruitment levels, the establishment as at 5 January 2017 stood at 1232.56 FTE against an organisational design of 1200.

It was anticipated that this would align in the future.

6. We note that a commitment was previously made, as part of the 2017/18 precept proposal, to a further review of the capital programme. Can the Panel be informed as to when they will receive the outcome of this review?

The PCC advised that during the next financial year he had asked the Force to work with his Treasurer to review the capital programme and its funding and to present him with a range of options.

Members will have note that the PCC has sufficient funding to meet the requirements for the next two years. The review will revisit both the detail of the programme and potential funding sources. Such issues he would expect to see would be forecast capital receipts, options for revenue funding, partnership working together with any funding issues arising from investment decisions to support the Strategic Alliance.

Once this has been completed and reviewed, the outcome would be incorporated into the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Noted**PCP Improvement Action Plan**

58 The Panel considered a joint report by the Chairman of the Panel and the Chief Executive, Dorset County Council which highlighted the 5 areas identified by members of the Panel for specific attention. The Improvement Plan was an important element as it sought to improve the effectiveness and impact of the work of the Panel going forward.

The Group Manager for Governance and Assurance, Dorset County Council, felt the report demonstrated the Panel's clear commitment to improvement. He specifically identified the additional duties that this plan would place on panel members if approved. Much of this work would need to happen outside of the formal meetings in order to deliver the desired outcomes and build on the good principles previously set. He felt this was the right direction of travel for members and, as members were supportive of the approach, he asked them to put themselves forward in order to progress the necessary work.

Resolved

That the content of the PCP Improvement Action Plan be supported.

Reason for Decision

To support and develop the effectiveness of the Police and Crime Panel.

Work Programme

59 The Panel considered and agreed its Work Programme for the remainder of 2017.

Areas going forward to include:

- Panel sub group to meet with the OPCC to review longer term financing settlements, formula funding, top slicing changes, with a view to joint lobby of government.
- Fire arms spotlight scrutiny review scheduled to take place during February.
- Sub group to be formed to look at the format of quarterly reports going forward.
- With reference to the new Police and Crime Bill and the new powers that this would provide for the PCC, it was agreed it would be helpful for members to have a brief summary of the key points from the OPCC at its next meeting.
- The Deputy PCC to provide 101 statistics in graphical format, categorised by time bands taken to answer calls, as information for the Panel.
- Report from the PCC to the next meeting of the Panel to set out context and background to activity in place to address serious sexual offences, child exploitation and domestic abuse.

Members' attention was drawn to a request from a member of the public, via the Police and Crime Panel's website, to scrutinise traffic speeding in and around Sherborne. The Group Manager for Governance Assurance, Dorset County Council, advised that he would respond to the member of public on behalf of the Panel and direct them to contact the Police regarding this matter.

The Chairman welcomed the attendance of a substitute member from Purbeck District Council at the meeting. He asked that members submit the names of their substitute members to him in order to try to ensure full attendance at future meetings.

Noted

Questions from Panel Members

60 No questions were asked by members of the Panel.

Meeting Duration: 10.00 am - 12.40 pm

Thank you, Chair

Today's agenda item concerns a proposal to raise the precept and, as you can see from the papers, this discussion is never clear cut.

Last year, with the Panel's endorsement, I raised the precept.

This is the second year of the current CSR, and I would remind you of the words of the then Home Secretary, Theresa May, in November 2015, when she wrote to Chief Constables and PCCs on the day of the spending review stating:

"Total Central Government resource funding to policing, including funding for counter terrorism, will be reduced by 1.3% in real terms over four years. Taking into account the scope that you have to raise local council tax, this means a flat real settlement for policing as a whole."

National policing budgets were therefore maintained at previous levels, but we are seeing an increasing amount of reallocations from Force budgets to fund additional national schemes, such as the Police Transformation Fund. A process we all call "Top Slicing".

The actual settlement for 2017/18 was a cash reduction of 1.4%, compared with 0.6% in 2016/17, but no indication has been given for future years.

It is important that we do not 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 nearly 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 £4m cut and cost pressures. I will be using that £1m to deal with emerging threats.

The Government has again given us a yearly settlement, despite the fact Local Authorities now have a financial settlement for the length of this Parliament.

We still do not know the outcome of the second review of the funding formula - something that you know I was instrumental in starting with Government.

So, in many ways, this decision is based on similar principles to last year's, in that we face the same precept cap; the same Government approach to funding and top slicing; the same issue of waiting for a new police funding formula; **plus another drop in capital funding and a higher than expected sum from collection funds.** It is also the second year in a row that the Chief Constable has asked for more funding to meet new challenges in the policing arena.

So, let us take a look at what we did last year...

USE OF THE 2016-17 PRECEPT INCREASE

In the current year, we increased the police precept by 1.97%; following public consultation which showed 82% supporting a rise of £3.74.

It was used to reduce the impact of further cuts in central funding and provided the flexibility to increase resources in three key areas of: **protecting vulnerable people, tackling emerging threats** and **increasing public access to policing**. This money was invested in:

- Employing extra investigators dedicated to investigating child abuse and protecting vulnerable children.
- Helping to create a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub with partners such as Dorset councils and the NHS, to increase joined-up working to protect vulnerable people.
- Increasing the number of officers in the cybercrime intelligence and investigation team, and enhancing the software available to them to identify sexual and violent offenders.
- Recruitment of a dedicated cyber-crime prevention officer to educate businesses and residents on staying safe online.
- Relaunching the Dorset Police website to make it easier to access information, interact with local Neighbourhood Policing Teams and to report crime online.

Without last year's precept rise, the Force would have had to lose the equivalent of 23 operational police officers and seven police staff dedicated to frontline operational support.

As far as this year goes...

PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT FOR 2017-18

The provisional Police Finance Settlement, was received on 15 December 2016.

The final settlement has arrived this week and is as expected.

As already stated, it is a single year settlement again.

Reallocations or top slicing have increased from £585m to £812m. The largest increases relate to the Emergency Services Network which is being used to fund the replacement of the current Airwave system and more money to the Police Transformation fund.

The Police Main Grant for 2017-18 has seen a further reduction of 1.4% in cash terms for all Forces. **For Dorset, this means a reduction of £0.819m from £58.568m to £57.749m.**

There has been no allocation for Counter Terrorism yet. [Raise port security.]

The Police Capital Grant has again been reduced. The allocation for Dorset has reduced by 15% from £486,052 in 2016-17 to £412,380 in 2017-18.

The Victims Services Grant from the MOJ was notified on 12 January. The same national total has been allocated but split on an updated population basis. The total allocation for Dorset has reduced by £468 to £897,544.

The Council Tax referendum limit for 2017-18 council tax increases has again been set at 2%. The only exception is for the 10 lowest precepting force areas which are allowed to increase their band D council tax by £5. This does not apply to Dorset as our precept is around the average of the 43 forces.

DORSET POLICE BUDGET FOR 2017-18

As well a cut in grant, significant cost pressures are also being faced in terms of pay, pensions, the new apprenticeship levy and increased national policing charges (NPAS, Police ICT company, etc).

You will know that I want to maintain/increase police officer numbers, which would naturally reduce as savings are delivered through the Strategic Alliance.

The total savings required to balance the 2017-18 budget is around £3.9m. The Strategic Alliance will deliver a significant proportion of these savings; with the balance delivered through the usual cost challenge processes and efficiency savings.

The tax base has increased by 1.2% which is slightly better than our MTFP assumption of 1%. There is significant growth in Bournemouth, Poole and Purbeck.

The Dorset Police share of the Collection Fund Surplus for 2017-18 is £0.77m, which is £0.37m greater than originally budgeted for. It must however be remembered that this is only one-off funding. Also, it is down from the current year (which was £1.443m).

The total allocation for the OPCC, incorporating the commissioned services and the local innovation fund, will remain at £2.134m for 2017-18. In addition, the audit and insurance section was transferred to the OPCC in the current financial year and now provides services across the Strategic Alliance. The budget for this service (£137k) has therefore also been transferred to the OPCC to match the costs which increases the OPCC budget to £2.271m.

The specific grants for Victims Services will again be spent directly by the PCC.

All of the remaining Police Revenue Grant / Precept and the other specific grants will be passed to the Chief Constable for the commissioning of police services. The total is £118.986m compared to £118.915m in the previous year.

So, let us look at the future outlook...

The Provisional Settlement has again only delivered a single year of detailed financial allocations for policing. As already mentioned, the statements from the Policing Minister imply that future settlements will protect police funding but only on the assumption that Council Tax is raised each year.

Adding further uncertainty, detailed work is currently underway on the new police funding formula which will determine the way in which government funding for the police service is split between forces. This was originally supposed to be implemented for 2016-17 but that process was abandoned and a new review commenced. It is not now known what the future proposed changes to the formula will be or when they will be implemented. New methodologies are now being examined for the formula and these may not be beneficial to Dorset.

In relation directly to these precept proposals for 2017-18, the timeline of events is as follows:

Firstly, as soon as the Chief Constable made the request, a public consultation was commenced via the website to seek views on whether the public would be prepared to pay an additional £3.80 per year.

I supplemented this on line survey with face to face consultations across the County.

The public were told that a increase of 2% in in the policing element of council tax would generate an extra £1.04m which would offset the reductions in grant from the Home Office. Whilst this rise in precept would not give us any additional money, we are making savings in other areas and we would look to increase some services with this money.

With a rise, this would be invested in:

- Protecting adults at risk of harm: Including enhancing our ability to prevent and investigate abuse of older people, which is a trend in Dorset and nationally.
- Improving our response to common, non-emergency types of crime: investing in Appointment Cars to visit victims and take details at prearranged times.
- Continuing to embrace new technology: Including further enhancements to Dorset Police's website, such as the ability to make payments online rather than by post.

The precept consultation generated over 4,485 responses, which was 8% higher than last year. The results were 80% in favour of the option of increasing Council Tax by 2% and using the additional revenue for the priorities as set out above.

CLOSE

The Panel should know that I was open minded about freezing the council tax policing element this year except for the three reasons mentioned, namely:

The Government expects me to raise the precept; and secondly, the Chief Constable, requested a precept rise; and, thirdly, under my statutory responsibilities I have consulted the public. Those consultation results show 80% are in favour of an increase.

Never forget that I oversee a force that is debt free, a force with adequate reserves, a force that has undergone the biggest IT change in its history, a force that has already paid its pension deficit and a force that punches above its weight achieving GOOD ratings in numerous HMIC inspections.

By improving the efficiency of the Force and releasing under-used assets, I have enabled it to replace the legacy of in-house IT systems with new 'fit for purpose' applications that meet our collaborative agenda.

And the Panel will know that we managed to introduce eight of my manifesto pledges within 100 days, improving police accountability, efficiency and performance.

And so, in summary, Chair, my preferred option is to increase Council Tax for 2017-18 by 1.98%. This will generate additional precept income of around £1.04m.

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.

Thank you. I now invite questions and comments.

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