



Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset,
DT1 1XJ on Monday, 14 January 2019

Present:

Pauline Batstone (Chairman)

Katharine Garcia (Vice-Chairman), Kevin Brookes, Toni Coombs, Beryl Ezzard, Bill Pipe and
Kate Wheller

Officers Attending: Nick Jarman (Corporate Director for Children's Services), Paul Beecroft (Communications Officer (Internal)), David Bonner (Intelligence, Insight and Performance Manager), Jonathan Carter (Head of Specialist Services), Michael Potter (Project Engineer), Mark Taylor (Group Manager - Governance and Assurance), Martyn Underhill (Police and Crime Commissioner) and Fiona King (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

(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 Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on:
Tuesday, 12 March 2019

Apologies for Absence

1 There were no apologies for absence.

Code of Conduct

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

Minutes

3 The minutes from the meeting held on 11 October 2018 were agreed and signed.

Public Participation

4 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.

Update from the Police and Crime Commissioner

5 Following the recent collapse of the proposed merger with Devon and Cornwall Police, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) gave members a presentation on the details of the proposed merger (attached as an annexure to these minutes). The PCC noted that all of the four decision makers 'signed off' the business plan however, despite this Alison Hernandez then decided that she did not want to pursue it.

The proposal had been driven by operational police and not by politicians. The main reasons for a merger were about increasing operational resilience within the Police. Whilst the merger would have saved another £70m, now that it is not happening, the cost to Dorset as a result of the failure would be between 100 and 150 frontline police

officers.

Following a question about the amount of money spent on the merger the PCC undertook to forward the details to members outside of the meeting. Costs included the consultation and on-costs in relation to staff working on the proposals. These costs have been confirmed, as around £250k, with the agreements that, due to the relative sizes of the two police forces, Devon and Cornwall police would fund 70% of the merger programme and 30% would be funded by Dorset Police. Specifically, the net spend in 2017/18 was £12,059 (as the Alliance was successful in securing a £50,000 Police Transformation Fund grant), and £233,725 in 2018/19.

The PCC highlighted to members the Home Office Assessment Criteria and the aims that sat underneath them and was still hopeful that this could be achieved as part of the Alliance work.

Following a question about the reasons for the Devon and Cornwall PCC not wishing to proceed with the merger, the PCC advised she felt there was not enough stakeholder support, specifically from Local Authorities and Councillors, and differences in respect of the precept which she wished to increase it higher which would have then needed government permission. The PCC and Policing Minister felt this would be unfair on the other 42 Police Forces in the country.

The Chairman asked what impact the collapse of the merger had on the PCC's ability to keep Dorset safe. The PCC felt there would be an impact but highlighted that Dorset Police were recognised as a good strong police force. He highlighted that inter agency co-operation was not so good and needed to get better, as highlighted in recent inspection reports. He felt this would be easier to achieve with a merged force. He added that there was still an opportunity to go for an all age vulnerability hub model.

In response to a question about whether a merger could take place in the future the PCC felt that with a change in government this could happen and noted that Section 32, of the police Act 1996, gave the Home Secretary the power to force a merge.

Following a discussion about all the work that had been done in preparation for the merger, the PCC confirmed that this would be useful in years to come and that information from previous years had been used when the business case was being compiled. He added that all best and poor practice had been captured.

Moving forward the PCC highlighted how officers and partners could get better at vulnerability and that the precept rise which was currently being consulted on, would help to address this. It was hoped to transform various areas of policing this year, along with an increase in some frontline staff with the proposed £24 precept rise.

The PCC advised members of the programme of roadshows, to talk to members of the public about the precept, that he had been attending and that at a recent one in Bournemouth he had spoken with more than 80 people. He highlighted the higher support received from the public with face-to-face contact rather than online.

Following a question from a member about a recent article in the press regarding a private security company operating in the Weymouth area, for a charge, and the PCC's views on this. The PCC responded that he felt uncomfortable with this approach and thought it could lead to a bigger debate in policing.

Noted

Safeguarding Vulnerable Children

- 6 Following the publication of a news article entitled 'The government report says Dorset Council is not safeguarding the most vulnerable children' the Director for Children's Services explained to members the progress that had been made to date and highlighted the report which set out a number of activities that were on going.

He explained this article arose from a joint targeted inspection review which happened back in May 2018 and since then a written statement of proposed actions had been submitted and accepted without any further amendments. This was not just about children from Dorset but all children in Dorset. There were around 37 children in this group at present and a Children Missing Education Group had since been formed as it was important to know where these children were and that they were receiving education appropriate for their needs.

The Director added that neglect was a common reason why Children Services were involved with families and he was continuing a review of how neglect was being dealt with. The directorate was working closely with Somerset which was proving successful in terms of cross border issues.

One member made reference to some media coverage some time ago in respect of sexual exploitation when Dorset was criticised for not knowing how many young people were at risk. She was concerned that some of the lessons had not been learned. The Director explained the increasing demands on all departments and that in the past expectations were not there for certain groups of young people but he did understand the prevalence of this. Nowadays the focus was on partnership working and confirmed officers worked very closely with the Police, especially in respect of county lines.

Noted

Outcomes Focused Monitoring Report: December 2018

- 7 The Committee considered a report by the Director for Children's Services which included the most up to date available data on the population indicators within the 'Safe' outcome along with information on performance measures and risk management.

The Strategic, Insight, Intelligence and Performance Manager highlighted areas for focus in respect of Children and Adults. He also highlighted the changes to the format and style of the report with the aim of making some of the statistics clearer. The Chairman was pleased to see rates and percentages but would prefer to see actual numbers listed in the report.

In respect of highway maintenance this was highlighted as a fairly good news story. One member made reference to a lot of surface delamination, mainly on estate roads, and highlighted this as an issue.

Following a discussion on an increase in the total crime in Dorset, officers highlighted the seasonal adjustment and a number of big events that happened in Dorset which might inadvertently skew the figures.

In response to a question regarding coercion, the Strategic, Insight, Intelligence and Performance Manager undertook to look into this and add more clarity in future reports.

One member highlighted the direction of travel within the report and the Strategic, Insight, Intelligence and Performance Manager undertook to make the numbers clearer in future reports. It was noted that at a recent meeting of the People and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee a number of notes had been made to

improve this report going forward to the new Council. The intention was to try and localise these reports also.

In response to a question about the parameters of the medium, the Strategic, Insight, Intelligence and Performance Manager advised that this was set by people that contributed to the reports in their professional judgements. This would also be looked at as part of the review process. He added that as part of LGR his team were looking at the risk management process.

Noted

Work Programme

8 The Committee considered its Work Programme.

Members were advised that the Shadow Executive and Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been informed of the work undertaken by the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee over the last 2 years. They had also been advised of topics that could benefit from further and ongoing consideration. It was recommended that the Shadow Council be notified of the following:-

- Personal Independent Payments (PIP)
- Universal Benefits
- Children Out of School (i.e. children missing education and school exclusions)
- Domestic Abuse
- Delayed Transfers of Care

Following discussion one member felt that a general observation for the end of the first year of the new Council would be to look at the impact on service users of the change as a result of LGR.

It was also agreed that following the update from the PCC a wider look at vulnerability across the area, could be relevant. Neglect could also be an area to be looked at.

Members felt that the impact of the closure of youth centres needed to be looked at by the new Council. It would be helpful to look at the whole picture, not just specific areas, and how the gap around the county had been filled and the sustainability of this.

Resolved

That the Shadow Council be asked to look at the following areas in addition to Personal Independent Payments (PIP), Universal Benefits, Children Out of School (i.e. children missing education and school exclusions), Domestic Abuse and Delayed Transfers of Care:-

- The impact on services users as a result of LGR
- Vulnerability
- Neglect; and
- The impact of the closure of youth centres.

Questions from County Councillors

9 No questions were asked by members under Standing Order 20(2).

The proposed merger of Dorset Police and Devon & Cornwall Police

Page 5



Minute Item 5

Why do we work together?

- Similar policing styles, values, and priorities
- Strong links with our communities
- Shared rural, coastal, and urban geography



25% of policing is already aligned

Operational Policing

- Roads Policing
- Dogs
- Firearms
- Drones
- Prevention
- Integrated Offender Management

Operational Support

- Ops Planning and Command
- Alcohol Licensing
- Professional Standards
- Intelligence
- Evidential Property

Business Support

- Legal Services
- Finance
- People
- Information Management
- Business Change
- Audit, Risk and Insurance
- Fleet Services
- Admin
- Business Support Services
- ICT
- Comms

Other teams due to go live

- Firearms Licensing
- Major Crime
- Resource Management Unit

Merger plans announced

In September 2017, Chief Constable Shaun Sawyer of Devon & Cornwall Police and retired Chief Constable Debbie Simpson of Dorset Police announced the plans for a proposed merger.

Source: BBC Spotlight 6/9/2017



This was the right thing to do

**Long-term sustainability of
policing provision**

**Increased operational
resilience**

Transformation

**Efficiency, for example, through
reducing duplication**

**Stronger voice for rural, urban
and coastal policing in the
national landscape**

**Wider public-sector
transformation**

**Growth through reinvestment
of savings in the frontline**



This was really the right thing to do

Decision making

- 4 corporations sole
- working styles
- philosophy
- agendas

Governance

- 3 governance strands
- no clear lines of oversight
- governance costs
- opportunity costs



Home Office Assessment Criteria

1. Does the merger proposal have a clear **economic** basis? (including a clear and viable path for precept equalisation)
2. Will the merger improve the **efficiency** of the police?
3. Will the merger improve the **effectiveness** of policing?
4. Will the merger have an impact on **public safety**?
5. Does the proposal have sufficient **local support**?
6. How, due to the merger, the public will continue to have an **effective voice/scrutiny** on policing in Dorset? (which covers a large geographical area)



I. Economic Basis

Aims	Weighting (%)	Weighted score		
		Existing state	Merge	Extended strategic alliance
Improved Service to the Public	52%	16%	30%	19%
A More Resilient & Sustainable Police Service	17%	3%	10%	6%
Increased Operational Efficiency	18%	5%	10%	6%
Increased Accountability	5%	1%	4%	2%
Increased National Influence	8%	3%	5%	3%
Total	100%	28%	58%	36%



2. Efficiency: Cost-benefit

	Option			Option		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
	Status Quo	Alliance extension	Merger	Status Quo	Alliance extension	Merger
	Total (£'000s)			NPV (£'000s)		
Benefits						
Total	97,567	101,303	142,741	79,846	82,874	116,189
Cost						
Total	11,439	11,614	14,704	10,188	10,333	13,086
Net benefit pre-adjustments	86,128	89,689	128,038	69,658	72,542	103,103
Less:						
Total Optimism Bias and Risks	43,361	42,744	39,899	35,568	35,052	32,582
Total after optimism bias and risk adjustment	42,767	46,945	88,139	34,090	37,490	70,521



2. Efficiency: Productivity

- Static efficiency:
 - Restructuring operational capability
 - Elimination of duplication
 - £3.4m to frontline
 - Reduction of supervisory posts
- Dynamic efficiency:
 - Removal of inefficiencies



3. Effectiveness

- Single joined-up operating model
- Reduction in inspection regime: HMICFRS, FMS
- Single vision and mission: Better insight and analysis
- Single performance management framework
- Opportunity to implement good practice



4. Public Safety

- Resiliency across geography, including in rural and coastal communities
- Better ability to work with, and support, partners
- Whole system approach – co-commissioning, data sharing, joint needs assessments
- Value for money, economies of scale, capability



5. Local Support: Summary

The Home Office has given clear guidance regarding which stakeholders it considers engagement is vital.

Stakeholders “sufficient support”

- Staff, unions and staff associations
- Local public
- Local MPs
- Local authorities

Policing bodies “no clear objection”

- HMICFRS
- NPCC
- College of Policing
- Police and Crime Panels



5. Local Support: Public

- **11,828** responses (**1,789** of whom were staff)
- The combined responses to the headline questions were:
- As the police forces already work closely together, a merger seems like the next logical step: Agree – 45%, neutral – 13%, disagree – 41%
- I don't mind how the police are organised, as long as my community is safe: Agree – 57%, neutral – 10%, disagree – 32%
- I can see the benefits of the merger over working together in a strategic alliance: Agree – 45%, neutral – 14%, disagree – 38%



6. Effective voice / scrutiny

- Loss of direct local political accountability
- Ability to represent a larger area
- Potential models:
 - Deputy or assistant PCCs
 - Councillor advocates
 - Volunteer advocates
 - OPCC engagement / outreach workers
 - Better use of technology



Any questions?



The central graphic is a dark blue rectangular box containing four logos. In the top left is the Devon & Cornwall Police crest, with the text "Devon & Cornwall Police" below it. In the top right is the Dorset Police crest, with the text "Dorset Police" written vertically to its left. In the bottom left is the PCC logo, featuring a green map of Devon and Cornwall and the text "PCC Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Devon and Cornwall". In the bottom right is the Dorset Police & Crime Commissioner logo, featuring a purple gear icon and the text "DORSET POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER". At the bottom of the box, the text "Working together" is written in large white letters.

