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## DORSET POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

### MINUTES OF INFORMAL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2021

#### [LINK TO RECORDING OF MEETING](#)

**Present:** Mr Mike Short (Chairman), Cllrs: Bobbie Dove (Vice-Chairman), Pete Barrow (Cllr Barrow left the meeting at 12:49), George Farquhar, Les Fry, May Haines, Mark Howell, Sherry Jespersen, David Taylor, Tony Trent and Mr Iain McVie

**Apologies:** Cllr Barry Goringe

**Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):**

Simon Bullock (Chief Executive, OPCC), Marc Eyre (Service Manager for Assurance), Adam Harrold (OPCC Director of Operations), David Sidwick (Police and Crime Commissioner), Julie Strange (OPCC Chief Finance Officer) and Elaine Tibble (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

**18. Introductions and Actions Update (00:16:15 on recording)**

The Service Manager for Assurance gave a brief update on actions from the last meeting which had been added to the workplan. There was an outstanding item to be added to the work plan, for Alliance Savings. The update from the Police and Crime Commissioner can be found at 00:21:30 on the recording.

**19. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made at the meeting.

**20. Public Participation**

There were no questions or statements from the Public, Town or Parish Councils at the meeting.

**21. Firearms Licencing (00:24:00 on recording)**

The panel sought assurance through a verbal update from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) that the firearms licencing policy across the Alliance with Devon and Cornwall Police was fit for purpose and safe.

The PCC gave an outline briefing on the recent shooting in Plymouth, these mass shootings were very rare, and this was the first of its type since the Cumbria shootings in 2010. He highlighted the incredible police and partnership response, thanking those officers and volunteers involved.

He gave the panel an overview of the work underway to date referring to the Firearms Act of 1968 and the involvement of relevant organisations and governing bodies, together with reviews currently being undertaken. There were limits to what he was able to comment on due to the ongoing reviews and operational matters.

Questions from panel members and PCC responses can be found at 00:28:50 on the recording.

The statement made by the PCC is attached as appendix to these minutes.

**Action:** In response to a question regarding the number of people who had firearms licences in Dorset the PCC agreed to get the exact numbers of firearms licences and let the panel know.

22. **Police and Crime Plan Update and Response to Panel Feedback (00:33:28 on recording).**

The PCC responded to feedback from the Police and Crime Panel (PCP) on his new Police and Crime Plan (P&CPlan). The Panel had sought clear benchmarking, success parameters and timelines in order to meet a phased approach, a Precept impact statement and a demonstrable cost of Police demand in order to justify expenditure.

The PCC thanked the panel, his team and those involved in putting together his first Police and Crime Plan scheduled to be published by 31 October 2021, approximately five months ahead of the deadline. He provided a verbal briefing, going through the contents of the report advising that the plan could be revised and re issued at any time. Members were asked to note the report

Questions from the panel and responses can be found at 00:41:00 on the recording. These focused on:-

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and the reporting mechanisms.

How the PCC proposed to make the Police “Crime Fighters” again and reduce bureaucracy.

Effective drug rehabilitation.

Fraud and scamming.

Benchmarking.

ASB/Domestic Violence/County Lines.

Business Crime Prevention.

It was requested that the PCC ensures any future consultation surveys should include questions relating to all protected characteristics as defined by equality legislation.

**Actions** – Bring back an update on benchmarking to the Panel at their training day in November.

23. **Priority Lead Policy - Sign Off (01:17:05 on recording)**

The Service Manager for Assurance presented the Dorset Police and Crime Plan – Priority Lead Policy for approval from the panel.

It was proposed by Mr I McVie and seconded by Cllr M Haines that the panel were minded to delegate implementation of the policy to The Service Manager for Assurance.

On being put to the vote the proposal was carried.

24. **Q1 Monitoring Report (01:18:10 on the recording)**

The Police and Crime Plan Monitoring Report for Quarter 1, 2021/22 was presented to the panel, them being mindful that it was the previous PCC's plan they were scrutinising, not the new PCC's

The PCC highlighted that the monitoring report had a new look. The plan was still work in progress and would evolve, especially bench-marking sections.

The 6 priorities of the plan were introduced individually, (from May 6 to June 2021).

The OPCC Chief Finance Officer was invited to present the revenue budget performance up the end of July and the capital budget up to the end of June. (01:38:24 on the recording). There were no concerns over the 0.22% of the overspend reported on the revenue budget. In terms of the Capital programme this was reviewed quarterly and showed an underspend of 700k for the year. In relation to reserves, these largely reflected carry forwards. There were some identified capital receipts generated at the beginning of the year, these were not planned to be used at this point, they would be held and applied to the capital programme in a planned manner.

Questions relating to the financial report were invited from the panel. These can be found at 01:42:00 on the recording. Questions focused on:-

The new legal reserve and why it was under earmarked reserves and not out of general reserves.

The ability to look at financial resilience and making investments in order to generate income.

**Action** – in relation to the legal reserve it was thought that police officers paid monthly into a federation to cover legal issues. An update was requested on the financial position of the federation and its ownership of a hotel. (Due to issues of the National Staff Association).

General questions on the monitoring report can be found at 01:49:53 of the report and focussed on:

What effective scrutiny would be put in place by the PCC for the Dorset Police use of force and stop and search.

What recruitment measures were being carried out to recruit members to a new scrutiny panel.

Use of 101 and ASB – clear understanding for the public on report logging and information.

The new body to administer the 101 single non emergency number and measures to be taken to ensure it links in with local operations.

Different categories of crime.

Hotspot crimes.

Victim support.

**Actions** – PCC and OPCC Chief Finance Officer to look at options of income generation through CCTV.

Item for forward workplan (next year) – OPCC report on formation of new scrutiny panel for Dorset Police stop and search, use of force and taser.

25. **VFM of the Uplift in additional Officers in the 2021 year (02:38:00 on recording)**

The panel sought assurance from the PCC that recruitment was on track to meet the uplift in police numbers.

The PCC gave the panel an update on the current figures and the two main routes for new recruits into the force via a two or three year process and value for money.

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions of the PCC – these can be found at 02:41:40 on the recording.

These included:-

How the PCC would ensure the uplift met his police and crime aspirations.

Into what areas had the new officers been appointed.

Anticipated timescale when new officers would be up to speed, trained and on the ground.

How job satisfaction was monitored.

In view of the positive aspect of the recruitment of new officers, could the PCC convey the good news to the public.

The statement made by the PCC is attached as appendix to these minutes.

26. **Comfort Break**

12:49 – 12:55 – comfort break.

In accordance with Procedural Rule 8.1 It was proposed by Cllr Dove, seconded by Cllr May to extend the duration of the meeting.

Cllr Barrow left the meeting at this juncture.

27. **Innovation Fund Review (03:09:53 on recording)**

The Chief Executive of the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) presented an update on the operation of the Dorset Innovation Board for members to note.

He explained that as part of 2019/20 precept the former PCC and Chief Constable agreed that an innovation fund was created. In February this year an evidence based policing hub was launched allowing any member of the staff to access from any police device to submit ideas and offer feedback and support.

A number of priority areas for innovation and review had been highlighted in the report which were reported to the panel. He stressed that the Innovation Board and Fund were extremely useful in spearheading the work in innovation and problem solving.

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions relating to the Innovation Hub (03:23:00 on the recording)

These focused on:-

Communication between partners and referral pathways.

Working with charities/funding application.

Which ideas had been brought forward and feedback on what had been successful. Looking towards a process to maintain funding and access and if this should be part of the base budget.

Was the Innovation Board going to mix with other Boards and share ideas.

**Action** – item for workplan next year to review and look at what had been successful and sustainable.

28. **Complaints Update**

The Chairman of the Police and Crime Panel Complaints Sub-Committee advised that no complaints had been received.

29. **Forward Workplan**

The forward plan was noted.

Additional agenda items had been requested and The Service Manager for Assurance suggested re-allocating some items outside of the meeting.

**Actions:** Forward Workplan to be put on the agenda for discussion at the PCP training day in November.

For the next meeting a verbal update on the Estates Review.

30. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

31. **Exempt Business**

There was no urgent business.

**Appendix**

**Duration of meeting:** 10.00 am - 1.25 pm

**Chairman**

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# Appendix

## Item 4 – Firearms Licensing:

*Members will be aware of the tragic events in Plymouth on the 12 August, where Jake Davison shot and killed five people in the Keyham area of the town before fatally wounding himself.*

*Chair – I am sure that the Panel would join me in sending our thoughts to the family and friends of Maxine Davison, Sophie and Lee Martyn, Stephen Washington and Kate Shepherd, plus to the two further individuals shot and wounded, who have not been publicly named.*

*The first thing I would say Chair, is that mass shootings are incredibly rare, and indeed this was the first incident of this type since the Cumbria shootings of 2010.*

*The second thing to highlight is the incredible police and partnership response to this horrendous incident, and to offer our thanks to those officers, staff and volunteers who continue to put themselves in harm's way to protect us.*

*Whilst it is premature to engage in debate around the possible motive for this senseless tragedy and, of course, this remains an operational policing matter, the issue of firearms licensing has been raised and given the Panel's previous scrutiny of this function I thought it helpful to provide an overview of the work underway – as this has been my focus.*

*By way of brief background, Chair, it might be helpful to reiterate that Firearms Licensing is governed by the Firearms Act 1968 and its amendments, coupled with the Home Office Guide on Firearms Licensing Law 2016. Force firearms licensing functions are also subject to Dorset Police internal governance, the HMICFRS inspection regime, and to oversight by my Office.*

*It might also be helpful to explain to new Members that firearms licensing went live as an Alliance function across Dorset, Devon & Cornwall in 2017. The Alliance Unit receive and process all aspects of firearms and explosive licensing applications and renewals.*

*The Team undertake enquiries consisting of research, telephone-based risk-based assessments or home visits. This results in a recommendation whether, or not, a certificate should be issued or renewed. This is then reviewed by the Alliance Firearms and Explosives Licensing Manager, who makes a decision under delegated powers from the Chief Constable.*

*In terms of my activity, Chair, immediately following the shootings, The Chief Constable updated me on the high-level details of the incident and later provided a fuller briefing at Joint Leadership Board.*

*There are three related reviews that I am linked into to a greater or lesser extent.*

*Firstly, is the usual referral and subsequent investigation by the Independent Office for Police Conduct. This investigation has confirmed the initial facts of the case, and you will understand, Chair, that it is not appropriate for me to make any comment on this and must allow it to follow due progress, however when the findings released, I will clearly discuss this with the Force.*

*Secondly, an internal investigation is underway, led by the Assistant Chief Constables of both D&C and Dorset. This is largely focusing on the operational side of the business, and so I have played no role in this thus far but, again, expect to consider these findings in due course.*

*Thirdly and finally, Chair, at a strategic level the Chief Constables and PCCs of both forces have agreed for an external peer review to take place to consider the degree to which current policies and processes within the Alliance Firearms Licensing Unit are compliant with national guidance and practices, together with an assessment of how policy is currently applied.*

*The review team will consider the vetting process, the management of risk and the decision-making processes within the unit. As Dorset PCC, I was one of four signatories for the terms of reference of this peer review.*

*I hope this was of help Chair, I am happy to answer questions but clearly, I am not able to comment on any ongoing investigations or reviews.*

## **Item 8 – VfM for Uplift:**

*Chair, Government made a manifesto commitment to recruit an additional 20,000 police officers in England and Wales in the three years to 31 March 2023.*

*In Dorset, our March 2020 baseline was 1,267 officers (headcount), and our target was to recruit an additional 50 officers in year one. We achieved this target – recruiting an additional 52, to take our headcount up to a total to 1,319 officers as of March 2021.*

*Our target to recruit a further 50 officers during year two (2021-22) remains on track, as we have several officer recruitment routes open to candidates, but the main routes are for those:*

- Joining without a degree (via the PCDA - Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship - route on a three-year course that enables students to gain a degree)*
- Joining with a degree (via the DHEP - Degree Holder Entry Programme - route on a two-year pathway)*

*There are also routes open to both transferees and re-joiners, and our positive action team has been able to restart face-to-face public engagement over the summer to highlight our vacancies right across our diverse communities.*

*In terms of the value for money for these additional officers, I suspect Members would want to know broadly what roles these additional officers have been deployed into.*

*Chair, the fact is that all student officers (unless they are on the accelerated detective scheme, which Dorset has only recently launched) are placed into local policing roles, once they achieve Independent Patrol Status, which should happen around week 36 of their training.*

*These roles are then protected within the local policing command for a period of 68 or 120 weeks (dependent on whether students are on a two- or three-year route) to allow them to gain operational competence, before they are permitted to move elsewhere within the Force. Of course, many will continue to work within these roles once confirmed in rank for many years.*

*Whilst working within the local policing commands, student officers will be under the guidance of Training and Development Officers, who will continue to tutor, guide and support students to achieve full operational competence, and ultimately be confirmed in rank.*

*Chair, hopefully that provides Members with a short overview of the police initial training process, and the assurance that not only the vast majority of our new officers will spend significant periods of their training within local police commands, but significant numbers also choose to remain there for a prolonged period.*