

POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 1 FEBRUARY 2024

Present: Dr Liz Mytton, Mr Mike Short,
Cllrs: Pete Barrow, Pauline Batstone, Graham Carr-Jones (left meeting at 11:20),
Les Fry, Sherry Jespersen (left meeting at 13:52), Patrick Canavan, Alasdair Keddie,
Peter Sidaway and Tony Trent

Apologies: Cllrs David Flagg

Also present: Cllr Jon Andrews

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

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

35. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2023 were confirmed and signed.

Actions from the last meeting had all been completed:
information on the saved lives project
an update on shoplifting and
the community safety partnership.

36. Declarations of Interest

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

37. Public Participation

There were no questions or statements.

38. Budget Precept Financial Year 2024/25 (00:03:22 on recording)

The Chairman advised that the Panel should consider the PCC's proposed budget requirement and independently scrutinize its appropriateness. The options open to the Panel were to either support, not to support or veto the proposal.

The PCC introduced the report and framed the strategic need – he gave a positive resume of this 7-year plan which he confirmed was working.

He reminded the Panel that Dorset Police was the second lowest recipient of the national funding formula, and that over half of the Force was paid for by the people of Dorset, whereas in other parts of the country it was 20%.

The Chief Constable then presented an oversight from the point of view of Operations (00:09:38 on recording). It had been a challenging year due to the impact of high inflation, increased borrowing costs and an underfunded pay award. Savings had been made by renegotiating contracts, innovative use of technology and a reduction of police staff posts, non-essential travel costs and non-essential training had been removed and overtime controls improved. Changes had been made to the way services were delivered and the budget was expected to balance. The Chief Constable highlighted a number of improvements and successes achieved and areas where crime had fallen in Dorset.

The Chief Finance Officer then set out the details of the key funding sources for the budget as well as the pressures facing the Force and the proposals to balance the budget including the precept proposal put forward. (00:30:25 on recording). The Chief Finance Officer advised that the final settlement had been confirmed and there were no changes required to the report. The pay award presented the greatest risk within the budget as this was estimated from September onwards. In summing up the Chief Finance Officer confirmed that the reserves level was adequate and the budget proposals robust.

The Director of Operations shared the results from the public consultation that had been run between the 19th December 2023 and 26th January 2024 (00:34:37 on recording)

Following the presentations, the Panel members were given the opportunity to ask questions of the PCC and his team. (00:43:20 on recording) The questions and responses can be found at appendix 1 to these minutes.

Decision: that the Police and Crime Panel support the PCC’s proposal to increase the precept for 2024/25 to £88,130,280 equivalent to a Band D charge of £293.58, an increase of £13 per annum or £1.08 per month”.

10 minute comfort break 11;20 - 11;30

39. **Q3 2023/2024 Monitoring Report 01:26:24 on recording**

The PCC gave an update on progress against the police and crime plan.

Priority One - Cut Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour.

Total crime had reduced in Dorset. Year to date ASB was down by 14% overall, and non-dwelling burglary had also reduced. There had been a slight increase in dwelling burglary. The PCC talked about his road safety campaigns, the Doc-Bike charity and the Fix the Future Fund which had awarded £51,824 to 11 organisations.

Panel members were given the opportunity to ask questions. The PCC responded to questions in relation to ASB, highlighting his Operation Relentless Community Fund which was designed to address ASB and had proved to be successful in a number of areas. He also acknowledged that it does take some time put mechanisms in place to address this issue.

Priority Two - Make Policing More Visible and Connected (01:41:18 on recording)
The number of full time equivalent police officers had increased to 1432, the response times for call handling and follow up had improved and the introduction of Rural Mounted Volunteers had increased visibility.

(01:48:30 on recording) Questions from the Priority Leads and Panel members. (attached at appendix 1).

Members discussed the complexity of crime and intelligence reporting, the importance of engagement and making sure the correct messages were relayed to the communities. Ward Councillors, Parish/Town Councillors and Faith Leaders should all be key community contacts to liaise with the Force.

ACTION: PCC to provide an update at the next meeting on the outcome of measures taken to improve and simplify the call handling process and communications to explain to the public how to use the website.

Proposed By Cllr Jespersen, seconded by Cllr Barrow.

Decision: In accordance with procedural rule 8.1 a vote was taken, the committee agreed to exceed the 3 hour meeting time limit.

Lunch Break 12:15 to 12:45

Priority Three - Fight Violent Crime and High Harm (02:44:14 on recording)
The PCC focussed on addiction substance misuse and Operation Scorpion. Dorset had been successful in arresting 26 people and taking £93,000 worth of drugs out of operation, increasing the latest figures to over 600 arrests with over one million pounds worth of drugs taken off the streets.

The PCC planned to use some reserves to get a violence reduction unit up and running. He had launched the Violence Against Women and Girls Improvement Panel, which brought subject matter experts together to provide vital feedback and insight.

Priority Leads and Panel members were invited to put forward questions (02:52:00 on recording).

In order to drive down knife possession the PCC had funded each patrol car to have a knife wand and he had also funded a portable knife arch.

Priority Four - Fight Rural Crime (02:59:51 on recording)
The PCC was pleased to report that rural crime had reduced. He had carried out a rural crime survey, the Dorset Partnership against rural crime continued and 5

Forces had come together to share intelligence in Operation Ragwort to look at transit across borders. A part time fly tipping role had been created to gather evidence of fly tipping hotspots. 10 rural mounted volunteers had also been recruited.

(03:04:55 on the recording) Panel member questions.

Priority Five - Put Victim and Communities First (03:15:48 on recording)

The PCC reported that hate crime had gone down. The Immediate Justice scheme had been launched for Dorset together with a survey to understand how communities would like the scheme to work in their area. The PCC highlighted the Force's work with shopkeepers to try and drive down shoplifting figures, he also addressed the issue of hate crime.

(03:20:27 on recording) Priority Lead and member questions.

Priority Six - Make Every Penny Count (03:36:47 on recording)

The PCC welcomed the award of Home Office Safer Street funding to Dorset which would have a great effect in keeping people safe in Dorset.

Questions from the Panel (03:40:01 on recording) and attached at appendix 1.

(03:45:17 on recording) the Chief Executive offered some more detail regarding ICT and future contact systems in order to streamline the system as a whole.

40. Rehabilitation (03:48:51 on recording)

The PCC presented the report which provided the Panel with an update on the PCC's work in support of the rehabilitation of offenders. The report addressed the four Key Lines of Enquiry provided by the PCP.

The PCC focussed on elements of the report, namely the importance of offender rehabilitation in reducing offending rates. This required a full "wrap around" service to make sure those people leaving prison had what they needed to stop them offending again. Factors being looked at ranged from getting offenders into accommodation, including a new initiative in the Southwest Region called "Prisoners Build Homes". These were basically eco-pods and those constructing the homes were gaining new skills which would also give them the resources needed to find work. PCC's in the South West had funded Dorset Trade Skills to deliver education and training to younger people, Future Roots was another operation in North Dorset where a farm housed young people who may have been involved in county lines and may have issues. The PCC highlighted a number of opportunities available to young people to steer them away from criminality.

The PCC raised concerns that the whole country was not getting to grips with drug and alcohol problems. The situation needed tough enforcement, effective treatment and impactful prevention, which is what had been implemented in the "From Harm to Hope" drug combating partnership which had been running in Dorset for two years.

Questions from the authors of the Key Lines of Enquiry (04:08:52 on recording)

ACTION: In response to member questions the PCC suggested that an update on the outcome of the criminal justice board was added to the workplan.

41. **Complaints Update**

There had been no complaints to report.

42. **Forward Workplan**

The PCP forward plan was noted.

43. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

44. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

Appendix 1

Duration of meeting: 10.00 am - 2.23 pm

Chairman

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