

POLICE AND CRIME PANEL
Friday, 16th October, 2015

Present:-

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Councillor R. Frost

Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council

Councillor A. Jones

Councillor C. McGuinness

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Councillor C. Vines

Sheffield City Council

Councillor J. Campbell

Councillor S. Mair-Richards

Councillor J. Otten

Co-Opted Members

Mr. A. Carter

Mr. Chufungleung

F17. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

17.1 Due to the absence of Councillor Bowler (Chair) and Councillor Wallis (Vice-Chair), nominations were sought for the position of Chair for the meeting.

17.2 It was reported that due to the long term sickness of Councillor Bowler, Councillor Sioned Mair-Richards had been appointed by Sheffield City Council as their substitute representative.

Action: (1) That Councillor J. Campbell be appointed Chair for the meeting.

(2) That the Panel's best wishes for a speedy recovery be conveyed to Councillors Bowler and Wallis – Immediate.

(Councillor Campbell in the Chair)

The Panel welcomed Councillor Mair-Richards to her first meeting of the Panel.

F18. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

18.1 There were no questions from the member of the public present at the meeting.

18.2 No written questions had been received.

F19. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 11TH SEPTEMBER, 2015

19.1 Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting of the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel held on 11th September, 2015.

Action: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11th September, 2015, be approved for signature by the Chair.

19.2 Arising from Minute No. 11.2, Deborah Fellowes, Scrutiny Manager, reported that the questioner had received a detailed response from Dr. Billings, Police and Crime Commissioner. A summary of the response was as follows:-

“The flag is the rainbow flag which has been an internationally recognised symbol of the Lesbian and Gay community since 1978. Each marked Police vehicle has been displaying a window sticker in the front of the vehicle that can be easily seen by the public for a number of years. It is hoped that by seeing this symbol being openly displayed on the vehicle that will instil confidence in member of the public to make contact and report homophobic incidents. In doing so this will enable South Yorkshire Police to ensure the appropriate support services are offered to those involved”.

Arising from Minute No. 12.4 (visit to Atlas Court), it was noted that the visit would take place on either 23rd or 28th October, 2015.

Action: Deborah Fellowes to finalise arrangements and notify Panel members as soon as possible – Immediate.

Arising from Minute No. 14 (Annual Report), Councillor Vines reported that the Police and Crime Commissioner had agreed to meet residents to discuss anti-social behaviour.

F20. RECRUITMENT OF INDEPENDENT CO-OPTEE

20.1 Deborah Fellowes, Scrutiny Manager, reported on the recruitment process that had taken place for a replacement independent co-opted member to achieve a full complement of Panel members.

20.1 The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 required that the Panel, when co-opting members, must ensure that the co-opted members had the skills, knowledge and experience necessary for the Panel to discharge its functions effectively. The majority of candidates were strong contenders for the position but it was felt that the best candidate was Stephen Chufungleung who brought the most appropriate mix of skills and abilities to complement those of the existing Panel members.

Action: That Mr. Stephen Chufungleung be appointed as an independent co-opted member for a term of four years commencing 16th October, 2015, until September, 2019.

Stephen was welcomed to the meeting.

F21. CAPITAL PROGRAMME

21.1 Further to Minute No. 12.6 of the previous meeting, Dr. Billings, Police and Crime Commissioner, presented the 2015/16 Capital Programme which was approved in February, 2015, in the sum of £27.4M with further planned spending of approximately £29M from April, 2017 to March, 2020.

21.2 There were more than sixty schemes included in the Programme the management of which was delegated to the Chief Constable.

21.3 Since the original Programme was approved, there had been further additions as a result of further external funding and an assessment of the position at the end of 2014/15. The revised Capital Programme amounted to £27.5M for 2015/16.

21.4 Officers within the Force had provided forecasts of the anticipated level of spending in the current financial year. The overall forecast Capital outturn amounted to £24.8M, a forecast variation of £2.6M to the end of the year. The majority (£1.7M) was expected to slip into the following financial year. The full detailed position was set out in Appendix A of the report submitted.

21.5 Issues arising from presentation of the report included:-

- The proposed joint provision in Maltby for both the Fire Service and the Police was the start of an excellent collaboration, saving money for both parties and making better use of the building. All was on track with no problems or issues
- The level of borrowing, compared with previous years, was much higher due to the strategy of moving away from using reserve funds and using borrowing given the current low interest rates
- Regular reports were given to the Governance and Assurance Board and a strategic monthly planning meeting both of which considered reports relating to the Capital Programme. Due to the collaboration with Humberside Police, there was a Joint Collaboration Board to bring the infrastructure together particularly around IT projects. The Chief Finance and Commissioning Officer had commissioned an internal audit review to ensure awareness of any potential for slippage given the savings proposals and plans in place. The internal audit report would be available shortly

Action: That the project Capital outturn for 2015/16 be noted.

F22. ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

22.1 Further to Minute No. 12.2 of the previous meeting, Dr. Billings, Police and Crime Commissioner, presented the Engagement and Communications Strategy which demonstrated how the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) would engage and communicate with victims and the wider community and stakeholders.

22.2 Communication and engagement with the public and stakeholders was essential in order to understand what the priorities were and to ensure that their views were an integral part of the Police and Crime Commissioner's decision making process. It was also vital to increase public trust and confidence in policing.

22.3 There were numerous ways in which the OPCC currently engaged with the public (as set out in Section 4.3 of the Communications and Engagement Strategy) and would continually strive to seek out new ways of engaging and communicating with many different groups and sections of the community to ensure the processes were as inclusive as possible.

22.4 Throughout the Strategy, it was made clear the commitment to:-

- Be open, accessible, transparent, accountable and responsive
- Gather views and involve the community in setting police and crime priorities and commissioning services
- Inform the community of performance, how they had influenced priorities, how the OPCC held South Yorkshire Police to account and how the public could access services

22.5 A programme of engagement opportunities within the community was being established where members of the public could speak to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and members of the Engagement Team at a variety of venues. These would be promoted widely within the communities.

22.6 A section of the PCC's website was currently being developed which would provide information on all engagement activity undertaken since the PCC came into office and would then be updated on a weekly basis.

22.7 As part of the statutory duty to hold the Chief Constable to account on South Yorkshire Police's engagement activity with local communities, a full review of PACT (Partners & Communities Together) meetings had taken place. A set of recommendations had been agreed to improve the way the meetings worked and would be rebranded as "Community Safety Meetings" forging closer links with partner organisations to provide a more community-based focus. Work on this was currently ongoing with the Local Policing Teams and engagement with partners to establish the new meetings in the New Year. In those areas where PACT was working well there would be no change to the current format other than the name

change; in other not successful areas the existing PACTs may be merged with other established community meetings.

22.8 Issues arising from presentation of the report included:-

- Although the list of community groups, organisations and individuals the Police and Crime Commissioner had engaged with did not specifically mention an older person's group, almost every group had retired people in attendance. However, the Commissioner would look at engineering an invitation to meetings in that sector
- The OPCC had been kept informed of the progress of the South Yorkshire Devolution Deal but no more than that; the Police did not feature in the Devolution document
- A meeting with the Fire Authority, Fire Chief Officers and the Commissioner to talk about collaboration and efficiencies had been convened prior to the Government announcement of potentially PCCs running the Fire Service and replacing Fire Authorities. The Home Office consultation ran until 23rd October

Action: That the Communication and Engagement Strategy and the Police and Crime Commissioner's commitment to engagement activity be noted.

F23. FINANCE REPORT - OPTIONS FOR REDUNDANCY PAYMENT SCHEMES

24.1 In accordance with Minute No. 13 of the previous meeting, Dr. Billings, Police and Crime Commissioner, presented a report on the Voluntary Enhanced Redundancy Scheme together with details of the redundancy rates.

24.2 Savings and/or additional income of up to £17M had been required in order to balance the 2015/16 budget with a similar amount required for 2016/17. With the majority of the Force costs being employee costs, it was estimated that up to 300 staff posts would be lost over the said period.

24.3 Neither the Force or Commissioner had a budget for redundancy costs, therefore, in order to make the redundancy costs self-financing, the majority of the staff posts to be lost needed to be removed by July, 2015.

24.4 In line with statutory redundancy conditions, the Enhanced Voluntary Redundancy Scheme was only open to employees of the Chief Constable or Police and Crime Commissioner with 2 years' service or over (including those on Fixed Term contracts). The granting of any voluntary enhanced redundancy remained purely at the discretion of the organisation and, therefore, there was no right to severance or early retirement under the scheme.

24.5 The Chief Constable and Police and Crime Commissioner had power, in law, to enhance the statutory redundancy payments of any employee who had 2 or more years relevant service.

24.6 The basis for calculation of a week's pay had been the employee's actual weekly salary without reference to the statutory maximum (£475 per week).

24.7 The number of weeks' service had been enhanced by a factor of 2 subject to a maximum of 60 week's pay.

24.8 The Force had released 25 staff on VER in 2014 and 151 in 2015 costing a total of £3.4M at an average cost of £19,359 per individual. Had the same individuals been made compulsorily redundant it would have cost £3.1M, however, additional costs would have then been incurred due to the length of time compulsory redundancies would have taken to implement. Based on the 176 individuals, compulsory redundancy would have added a further £0.9M salary costs.

24.9 The VER scheme had allowed the Force to achieve the required reductions in staffing levels relatively quickly with no legal challenges.

Issues arising from presentation of the report included:-

- Not everyone who had applied had been successful due to service requirements
- Police Officers could not be made redundant therefore the VER option had only applied to 1 part of the workforce. Service provision had to be managed properly and sensibly

Action: That the report be noted.

F24. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:- That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (contains information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime and information relating to the financial affairs of particular persons).

F25. THE FUNDING OF HILLSBOROUGH LEGAL COSTS

23.1 Further to Minute No. 13, Dr. Billings, Police and Crime Commissioner, presented further information on the Police and Crime Commissioner's funding of legal costs relating to the Hillsborough Inquests.

23.2 The Commissioner was keen to remain neutral throughout and not comment on the inquests' process. The Coroner had issued a directive while the inquest proceedings were active for the purpose of the Contempt of Court Act 1981.

Discussion ensued on the report with a number of issues raised which Dr. Billings and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner responded to.

Action: That the report be noted.

Action: That the Panel be kept informed of any further developments.

F26. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Action: That a further meeting be held on Friday, 27th November, 2015, commencing at 11.00 a.m.