

POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Police and Crime Panel held on Monday 4 February 2019 at the Council Chamber - Shire Hall, Gloucester.

PRESENT:

William Alexander	Cllr Bruce Hogan
Cllr Julian Beale	Cllr Loraine Patrick
Cllr David Brown	Cllr Keith Pearson
Cllr Jonny Brownstein	Cllr Steve Robinson
Cllr Gerald Dee	Cllr Mattie Ross
Cllr Collette Finnegan	Cllr Louis Savage
Cllr Rob Garnham	Cllr Brian Tipper
Cllr Joe Harris	Cllr Will Windsor-Clive
Cllr Colin Hay	

Substitutes:

Officers in attendance: Jo Arnold, Mark Astle, Stephen Bace, Richard Bradley, Chris Brierley, Ruth Greenwood, Rod Hansen, Peter Skelton, PCC Martin Surl and Paul Trott

Apologies: Martin Smith

1. APOLOGIES

The apologies for the meeting were noted.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No additional declarations were made.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record.

4. SAFE AND SOCIAL DRIVING

4.1 Mark Astle (Fire and Rescue Service) and Jo Arnold (co-ordinator Safe and Social Driving) gave a presentation on this priority within the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan. The Commissioner introduced the item emphasising the word 'safe' within the priority name. He explained that the Chief Fire Officer led on the item, and that Mark Astle had led on this in the absence of a Chief. In regards to the Road Safety Partnership, he explained that he had

never withdrawn money from that partnership. The presentation outlined the current position for Gloucestershire compared to national statistics and the focus on prevention through education.

- 4.2 Members understood that in 2016, 27 people had lost their lives. In 2017 20 people had lost their lives. The majority of fatalities had happened in the later months of the years, this was due to changing weather conditions, darkened nights and behaviours. It was behaviour which could be changed. It was explained that most fatalities had occurred in the Cotswolds. Male fatalities were higher than female fatalities in all modes of transport other than car passenger.
- 4.3 With regards to education, the focus was on 16-24 year olds. This was because although there had overall been a decrease in the number of fatalities between those ages, there had been an increase already in the current year compared to the previous year. It was important to continue to deliver messages that would change driver behaviour. The Fire Service was now delivering education prevention packages to year 12 and 13 students across the county. By Spring 2019, 8 firefighters would achieve accreditation to ensure the continued delivery of this. Members heard details of the 'What if?' Road Show, which would be delivered to 3700 students throughout February and March.
- 4.4 In September 2018, a 'Leave your mobile phone alone' campaign was run for a week. The lack of knowledge and understanding from the public was evident of how prevalent the problem was. Speed camera vans had been placed in strategic locations. Drink/ Drug Drive campaign in December was carried out through social media, police operational support and educational support. The target audience was 17-25 year old male drivers. Members received details of how the campaigns were co-ordinated showing the partnership work with the Fire and Rescue Service.
- 4.5 As part of the 'Choose Zero' campaign 1142 students had received education throughout December. This had been very effective and would continue moving forward. Campaigns for the future, included seat belts and speeding on top of the continued mobile phone and drink and drug driving campaigns.
- 4.6 In the future there would be a review of the current action plan taking into account the data the team had received. These messages would be included in the Safe and Well visits that the Fire Service carried out. Options included the use of virtual reality headsets to give people a real insight into what it would feel like to be involved in an incident. One aspiration was to develop a safe and social driving app.
- 4.7 The Commissioner thanked the Fire Service and the Constabulary for the partnership work being carried out. He outlined the new technology being

used by the Police to help support this work and noted that the Chief Constable would welcome an increase in precept which would help fund further work in regards to Safe and Social Driving. The National Drivers Offending retrain scheme had been very effective, with the cost to the public reduced and more locations for people to go for those courses. 1% of the Policing budget was top sliced as part of the Commissioner's Fund and this funded a great deal of work. The Police did not receive any money from enforcing fines, the only funds allowed to be generated were those that directly paid for the enforcement and retraining.

- 4.8 One member asked about any targeted work around the effects of prescribed drugs of drivers. In response it was explained that this was about implementing these messages into Safe and Well Visits. Another member asked whether work was being carried out with pharmacies to help provide that information to people of the effects of medication on driving. In addition the member emphasised the importance of educating at an even younger age about safety on the road referencing children as young as seven playing games on the road. The member referenced the work of Police Cubs and the work in educating around speeding.
- 4.9 With regards to the Cotswolds having the highest amount of fatalities, one member referred to the A429 task group and asked whether there needed to be more visible campaigns such as signage on the road referencing the number of fatalities on a road. In response the Commissioner stated that 'Highways' was a county council responsibility but that he had provided a degree of funding for signage.
- 4.10 One member asked whether the Constabulary were asking young people on how they wanted to be engaged? It was explained that this work was very much led by young people and that the team were most interested in what they had to say. Members received details of collaboration across emergency services through the south west collaboration board and about the learning from what had worked in other areas. Members understood the role of the Skillzone centre in terms of helping to engage with young people.
- 4.11 Accident figures for November and December emphasised that this was the most dangerous time of the year and it was important to get that message out. It was explained that a lot of campaigning was carried out at that time of year.
- 4.12 One member explained that he thought that dash cams were useful in terms of providing evidence of where people were acting inappropriately on the road. This was something that was being taken forward in the future.
- 4.13 One member raised the lack of statistics to help support members in getting highways improvement work started. He asked if any work was being done to share those statistics. The Commissioner shared the member's frustration that sometimes it was about pre-emptive work being taken in areas where an accident had not happened yet. In response to a question it was explained

that insurance companies would not hand over data for data protection reasons.

- 4.14 One member asked whether the Police took action against incidents such as cars with only one headlight which in rural lanes caused problems. It was explained that there was money in the proposed budget to increase policing of roads. The Commissioner emphasised the partnership working needed to deliver some of these outcomes.
- 4.15 One member emphasised that this was a small percentage of incidents in regards to the overall population of Gloucestershire. He reiterated the importance of education with regards to the attitude of young people in a wider sense than just safety on the roads.
- 4.16 One member stated that she believed the drink drive limit was out dated and not fit for purpose and that it should be at zero. There was further discussion around areas of concern from members including trials on widening cycle lanes, as well as types of education and providing support for elderly drivers.

5. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

- 5.1 Paul Trott introduced the report which provided details on the actions of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office.
- 5.2 One member asked a question regarding the underspend on the police salaries budget. In response it was explained that the actual underspend for the year would be minimal; it had been anticipated that once the precept had been raised in 2018/19 it would take time to recruit officers so the additional income had been used cover short term projects. The Chief Constable explained that it took 22 months to replace a police officer, and that they were seeing a different profile of candidate coming into the Force. The Constabulary was on target to recruit 90 officers this year.
- 5.3 Members noted the Tri-Force update within the report. It was explained that there had been a difference of views around fire arms officers, with Avon and Somerset and Wiltshire unable to come to an agreement around this. The Commissioner stated that the County had a strong fire arms response team. The Chief Constable explained that there had been vacancies in fire arms capability in the past because there was a very high pass mark with regards to training and the role was very demanding. The capacity of the training centre was also a consideration. There was planned replacement for all the vacancies and those should be filled by the middle of 2019. One member asked for an update on the Tri-Force to a future panel meeting.
ACTION Democratic Services
- 5.4 In response to details within the report on the Criminal Justice System, members were informed that the government had recognised the failures in the changes they had put in place around privatising part of the probation

service. The contracts would be terminated early at the end of 2020 and there would be a change of approach. The Commissioner's Office was working closely with the Ministry of Justice on this. The Commissioner explained that his office had opposed the initial changes. One member stated that this was an area that the Panel should be interested in and expressed concern about the underfunding of the courts. He suggested that an item be put on the agenda for the next meeting to better understand the context behind the changes to the Criminal Justice system and its impact.

ACTION Democratic Services/ Martin Surl

6. PROPOSED GLOUCESTERSHIRE POLICE PRECEPT 2018/19

- 6.1 The Police and Crime Commissioner introduced the report which proposed that:

Funding for the proposed £119.912m 2019/20 revenue budget would require a police related Band D Council Tax element of £250.49. This represented an increase of 10.6% in the police related Band D Council Tax or £24 for the year.

- 6.2 The Panel had received a briefing in January to ensure that members had the background to the budget and an understanding of the options available. The Commissioner set out the proposal outlining the work being carried out by the OPCC and the work on consulting with the public. He outlined the financial pressures nationally and that, aside from a small increase in the previous year, the police locally had not seen any increase in funding since 2010. The balance between local funding and national funding was now at about 50:50 with Gloucestershire receiving one of the smallest grants from national government. He explained how the Constabulary had managed despite the financial pressures and the consequences of cuts. The Constabulary reserves had been used appropriately and not for the day to day running of the force. HMIC had commended the Constabulary on the way the reductions in funding had been managed.
- 6.3 It was the Commissioner's assessment that the Constabulary remained strong, but he felt that the Constabulary was now facing a pivotal point, and that the strain was beginning to show. He felt that if the cuts were not reversed the Force would be weakened and not able to deliver the service the public expected. This was a planned approach to take any flexibility provided by central government with regards to funding. The Commissioner had lobbied MPs to support additional investment from government.
- 6.4 The Commissioner explained that he had asked the Chief Constable to demonstrate how he would look to use any additional funding and how he had used the increase in funding he had received the previous year. The Chief Constable and his officers had provided this detail. For the proposals outlined by the Constabulary there would be a lead in time to see the

benefits, in particular around the recruitment of officers. Members noted the detail in a letter from the Chief Constable on how the additional funding would be provided. This included funding alongside the priorities within the Police and Crime Plan. The Commissioner emphasised the funding for the multi-agency safeguarding hub noting its importance in providing a better service for young people.

- 6.5 Referring to the previous presentation on Safe and Social Driving, the Commissioner outlined additional funding proposed in this area for roads policing and collision investigation. In addition there was additional money proposed to support adults at risk and Safer Cyber, in particular the digital forensics unit.
- 6.6 The Commissioner explained that performance in Gloucestershire around 999 calls was good but calls were increasing rapidly. In addition 101 calls were also increasing rapidly.
- 6.7 The Commissioner summarised that it was a measured and fair budget with intelligent proposals from the Constabulary as to how additional funding would be used.
- 6.8 In support of the increase, a member explained that there was an opportunity to help relieve pressures on policing. It was recognised that once that funding was in the base budget it would be there year after year. If the option of not asking for an increase was taken then that weakened the argument back to central government around additional funding. One member outlined the shift towards local funding and raised concerns around council tax as a non-progressive form of taxation. Concern was expressed around reductions in funding potentially leading to year on year increases in crime.
- 6.9 In response to a question, the Commissioner explained there was no additional funding in the budget going to a review of fire service governance as that review was complete and a decision would be made in the coming weeks. He reminded members that he had received a grant from government to carry out much of that work.
- 6.10 One member noted the recruitment of police officers noting that with the current numbers in training that would bring the Constabulary up to the planned establishment. He referred to the letter from the Chief Constable noting the aspirations within the letter based on the additional funding spread across the priorities. It was stated that there was no explanation around how the increase would affect the establishment and how that would be spread across the areas. In response it was explained that there would be an additional 50 police officers and 30 police staff. PCSOs would remain at the same level. There had been a planned increase in recruitment and the numbers should be up by the end of the financial year.
- 6.11 One member recognised that the budget could be balanced by a 2.5% increase and that with the core funding being one of the lowest, by

increasing the precept it was putting the cost of policing on the public and the most vulnerable would be the hardest hit. He asked why the Commissioner wasn't doing more to put pressure on central government. The Commissioner stated that this was not something he could change. There was a funding formula in place and commissioners had been lobbying to have that changed. It was understood that this would be considered as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review. The Commissioner stated that he had raised it on multiple occasions and was meeting with the Home Secretary. If the full amount wasn't asked for, the Commissioner felt that the Constabulary would be weakened. It was not enough to just balance the budget, investment was needed.

- 6.12 It was explained that the National Police Chiefs' Council had made a full submission to Government on the issue of police funding. There would be a planned communication approach to ensure communities understood about the reasons for the increase in precept.
- 6.13 One member asked for a 'strapline' of what the public would get for the increase in the precept. The Commissioner explained that in meeting members of the public he felt that they understood the pressures on the police. He explained that the police would only see an increase in funding of the council tax element of spending which was around 50% of the budget and that from government they were receiving nothing. The member requested something from the Commissioner's Office's communication team to help communicate that message.
- 6.14 In response to a question on the precept in future years, the Commissioner explained that he did not want to see an increase of this nature next year.
- 6.15 One member explained that a number of the public would just be concerned with whether the Chief Constable had enough officers to do the job. The Chief Constable felt that the investment was needed in order to save the County further issues and the need for greater investment in the future. In addition, the member asked that there be more scrutiny of the Commissioner's Fund to ensure the public understood how that money was used and whether it had good outcomes. The Commissioner stated that he welcomed the challenge.
- 6.16 The Chairman noted the previous year's Commissioner's Fund carry forward from the reserves. The Chief Finance Officer projected the carry-forward would reduce from around £700,000 to £500,000 in the following year. The commitment on projects was over a three year period and so the reserves would continue to come down.
- 6.17 One member commented that it was for the Commissioner to justify the increase in the precept and for the Chief Constable to show how that money could be spent. He noted a growth in the office of the Commissioner and asked whether that money could have been used in a different way. In response it was explained that this related to additional work within the office

and included a number of commissioning positions. There had also been the introduction of a part time post to consider complaints both of which would relieve police officers and staff of such work..

- 6.18 One member was concerned about the level of reserves noting the figures in the paper which outlined reserves in 2017 at 7% higher than the national average. The member expressed concern that central government might look at the levels of unused reserves in the future and use that as a reason to not provide funding. The Chief Finance Officer stated he would look to identify the Constabulary's reserve figures compared to national figures for 2018.

ACTION Peter Skelton

- 6.19 In response to a question it was explained that there was a continuous programme of savings. There were areas that were being looked at but no decisions had been made. 2020/21 savings were higher because it was part of a transformation strategy which included ICT investment.
- 6.20 One member outlined the fact that funding decisions made by government had led to fewer police officers and less visible policing. He stated that this was the message to the public as to why the precept was required to be raised by 10.6%.
- 6.21 One member emphasised the increasing demand from cyber-crime and suggested that big technology companies should be contributing to funding rather than the burden being placed on those that found it hardest to pay. He was interested in the Commissioner's view on the impact of technology and what he was doing to lobby on this issue. The Commissioner explained that technology was now in every part of policing. The Association of Police and Crime Commissioners met regularly and lobbied government that a proportion of funding should be coming from those companies. The Chief Constable outlined the complexities of cyber-crime and the particular skills required by the Constabulary. The Constabulary was working to adapt to respond to this.
- 6.22 One member asked whether there was any money in the budget to help support the health and wellbeing of the staff. The Chief Constable explained that work was being carried out on a strategy for this so it was felt that sufficient resources were in place..
- 6.23 Following the discussion on the proposed 2019/20 budget and precept, the Panel were asked to decide whether they:

Supported the precept without qualification or comment
Supported the precept and make recommendations, or
Veto the proposed precept

It was Resolved that:

Minutes subject to their acceptance as a correct record at the next meeting

The proposed police precept for 2019/20 be supported with the following recommendation:

That the Panel supports the Police and Crime Commissioner in making representations to the Home Office and HM treasury seeking that a proportion of police funding is provided by the large technology companies in order to fund policing of Cyber Crime.

CHAIRMAN

Meeting concluded at 1.20 pm