

CUMBRIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cumbria Police and Crime Panel held on Tuesday, 19 July 2022 at 10.30 am at Council Chamber, County Offices, Kendal, LA9 4RQ

PRESENT:

Mr W McEwan (Cumbria County Council) (Chair)

Mr RK Bingham, Cumbria County Council (Vice-Chair)

Mr KR Hamilton, Barrow Borough Council

Ms R Hunter, Independent Co-opted Member

Mr J Little, Independent Co-opted Member

Mr P McSweeney, South Lakeland District Council

Mr K Meller, Carlisle City Council

Mr A Smith, Allerdale Borough Council

Also in Attendance:-

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| Mrs L Harker | - Senior Democratic Services Officer |
| Ms H Reay | - Policy and Scrutiny Project Officer |
| Mr B Spencer | - Group Lawyer/Deputy Monitoring Officer |
| Mr W Johnston | - Group Finance Manager |

PART 1 – ITEMS CONSIDERED IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

1 ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED, that Mr McEwan be elected Chair of the Panel for the ensuing year.

Mr McEwan thereupon took the Chair.

2 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED, that Mr R Bingham be elected Vice-Chair of the Panel for the ensuing year.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Ms D Holden, Mr M Johnson and Ms E Weir.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

5 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED, that the press and public be not excluded from the meeting for any items of business on this occasion.

6 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no items of public participation to be considered at this meeting.

7 MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

8 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING FINAL REPORT FOR 2021-22

(1) Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Budget Report

The Panel received a report from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) which provided the Commissioner's Financial Summary 2021/22 forecast as at 31 March 2021.

Members noted the an underspend of £40k which was largely as a result of reductions in staffing and other office running costs (£42k), transport costs (£3k) and additional income (£10k), offset by increases in training and conferences of £15k.

The Panel was informed there was an increased expenditure on insurances of £52k as a result of increased premiums at renewal.

A discussion took place regarding the effects of the increased fuel costs. Officers explained that whilst the figures referred to in the report set out the financial position until the end of March 2022 confirmed that an impact on fuel costs were currently being experienced.

(2) Cumbria Constabulary Revenue Budget 2021/22

The Panel considered a report from Cumbria Constabulary which provided details of the Constabulary's Revenue Budget Monitoring 2021/22.

Members were informed that the principal changes in the last quarter related to increase in expenditure on police officer pay and overtime, offset by increased income and by budgets set aside for innovation initiatives, COVID recovery and capital financing not being utilised.

The Panel drew attention to the £2.5m police pay overspend and asked whether the £1m to restructure ranks was statutory. The Commissioner confirmed this was not statutory but explained that due to the large intake of additional police officers increased supervision and mentoring was required during their probationary period, therefore, it had been agreed there should be a commensurate increase in leadership ranks.

Members discussed Operation Uplift and were informed that the additional officers had been recruited each year with the expectation that this would also be achieved this year. The Commissioner explained the Scheme had attracted a number of transfers from other forces around the country and highlighted the benefits of the experience this brought.

The Panel was informed that due to the success of Operation Uplift 15 additional officers had been allocated. Officers explained that the Force now employed 1,349 police officers highlighting this was the highest number Cumbria had ever employed.

A discussion took place regarding a future budget forecast for Appleby Fair. The Commissioner highlighted the significant costs of the event and explained there was an expectation that the ongoing budgets would be similar to this year's.

A question was raised regarding the £1.5m contribution made to reserves. Officers confirmed this was the result of various one-off payments received for innovation which were transferred back to reserves.

The Commissioner explained to the Panel that although there had been an allocation for additional police vehicles there had been problems purchasing them during the pandemic.

The Panel discussed the overall budget and potential 3% pay award for police officers. Officers confirmed the announcement of the pay award was still awaited and explained that 5% was being considered.

The Chair thanked officers for their report.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

9 POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

The Panel considered a report which presented the text for the Police and Crime Commissioner's sixth Annual Report, covering the period from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022. Members noted that the Report also contained public documents of the Chief Finance Officer's Narrative statement in the final accounts and the Annual Governance Statement.

Members were informed that following re-election of the Commissioner in May 2021 a new Police and Crime Plan had been developed which contained a number of police and crime objectives which contributed towards achieving the overall aim of 'Keeping Cumbria Safe'.

A discussion took place regarding the demand on Cumbria Constabulary noting the number of 101 calls received. The Commissioner confirmed that the figure of 135,275 was actual telephone calls and that other forms of communication such as e-mails and the successful new 'live-chat' etc were in addition to that figure. Members were informed that the average response time for a call was just over 4 minutes, highlighting that Cumbria was one of the best performing in the country.

Members noted the 14 different areas of demand on Cumbria Constabulary and asked whether there were any trends. The Commissioner explained it was impossible to compare year on year but highlighted the continued success with regards to county lines. The Panel was informed this was a national problem, therefore, work was being undertaken both regionally and nationally.

During the course of discussion the Commissioner also highlighted concerns regarding continuous anti-social behaviour, which again, was a national issue. Members were informed that Community Beat Officers had been established in West Cumbria to help combat this matter. It was explained there were early indications that this had been successful, therefore, introduction of this would be considered across the county.

Members were informed that currently the Force was the fourth best rated in the country for managing offenders. The Panel noted the launch of the offender management programme 'Pathways' which reduced re-

offending through implementation of an out of court disposal framework. Officers explained that in its first year it had supported 383 offenders of low level crime and 233 victims engaged with Pathways restorative services.

During the course of discussion it was suggested that more detail on the preventing and reducing re-offending objective through the outcomes on the Pathways programme be made available in the future.

A discussion took place regarding quality issues and it was confirmed they were service issues regarding quality but they were not related to individual officers.

Members asked how the additional Independent Sexual Violence Advisory posts which were currently a partnership between Cumbria County Council and Ministry of Justice would be funded in future. Officers confirmed that this was guaranteed until March 2025 and would add to the core Team.

The Panel noted the 9,120 arrests made by the Force and it was agreed that further information regarding successful convictions from those would be circulated to members.

Whilst members welcomed the information they highlighted the lack of performance data and asked whether there were any significant areas of crime where performance was worse than the national average. The Commissioner advised there was one area which was under performing in comparison to other forces but emphasised this was not a major concern.

The Panel was informed that all performance data was considered regularly at Public Accounts Committee and the information was available on the website. Officers also suggested that Criminal Justice Scorecards which supported performance data could be made available to members.

A discussion took place regarding the availability of future performance information to the Panel and it was agreed officers would consider this request.

The Panel welcomed the Report and suggested that more detailed information regarding specific projects undertaken should be included in a future Annual Report. During the course of discussion it was suggested that the Report be posted out to all households in the county; it was confirmed this was being investigated to be included with precept information.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

10 POLICE AND CRIME PANEL CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

Members received the draft Cumbria Police and Crime Panel Chairman's Annual Report 2021-2 which reflected the range of activity undertaken by the Panel over the last year highlighting its importance as a tool to promote the valuable work of the Panel to the public and partners.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

11 PERFORMANCE UPDATE ON THE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN

The Panel considered a report which presented an update on Objective 3 of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan: A Focus on Victims.

Members were informed there were a range of ways in which feedback was received on experiences of victims which supported the Commissioner and his Team to understand what was important in commissioning services and to identify areas on which assurances were sought through the accountability process.

The Panel noted that in addition to this, funding secured from NHS England enabled independent research to be commissioned into the experiences of survivors of rape and sexual abuse, with the aim of understanding their journeys from first accessing a service onwards. It was explained that the report from the University of Cumbria was now being considered by criminal justice and support agencies, including a partnership workshop, to look at how the aspects of the journey which worked well for survivors could be built on and where further improvements could be made, to make a difficult process easier for victims. Members asked that a summary of the report be circulated to the Panel.

Members noted that the opportunity had recently been taken to review how information was obtained and used regarding victims' satisfaction with services following a crime, with a focus on OPCC commissioned support and the Police. The Panel was informed that information was currently being collated and would provide the opportunity to consider any necessary improvements.

During the course of discussion concerns were raised regarding the possibility of refugees being the subject of modern slavery. The Commissioner confirmed that Cumbria Constabulary were alive to this matter.

Whilst the Panel welcomed the report it was suggested that a review of trends and trajectory covering all key objectives be made available in the future. It was agreed that officers would discuss this matter further with the Chair.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

12 UPDATE ON COMPLAINTS

Members received a report from the Monitoring Officer (Cumbria County Council) which advised of any complaints received in accordance with the Panel's Complaints Procedure. The report outlined where appropriate, what, if any, action had been taken in respect of the complaints.

Members noted that at the time of the previous meeting of the Panel, advice had been sought but not yet received in respect of two ongoing complaints of which the OPCC's view was that neither were properly within the remit of the Police and Crime Panel. It was explained that advice had now been received and was confidential and legally privileged.

The Panel was informed that the key points were that both complaints related to matters in which the Commissioner had instigated an Independent Review of particular complaints.

Members were informed that where the conduct which was the subject matter was not that of the Police and Crime Commissioner, but that of an Independent Reviewer, it was beyond the legal remit of the Panel.

The Panel noted that in the last report there was mention of one anonymous referral that appeared to relate to other matters which was referred to the report author. Members were informed there was no further action for the Panel on this matter, as it was neither within its remit or something that could have been progressed in any event.

Members noted that since the date of the last report, correspondence had been received but due to Officer absence had not been progressed. It was explained that at the time of writing, there was either no discernible complaint or a complaint that would be within the Panel's remit. It was agreed a further update would be made at the next meeting.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

13 PANEL UPDATE REPORT

Members received a report from the Strategic Policy and Scrutiny Advisor (Cumbria County Council) which gave an update on key issues and developments that had occurred since the last meeting of the Panel on 25 January 2022. The information detailed an Update on National Policy and Legislation, Effective Police & Crime Panels – Training Resources, New Performance Tables showing 999 calls data and Police and Crime Panel Work Programme.

The Panel discussed the State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2021 highlighting two of the key points:-

- prevention of crime is best and the key purpose of the police, and the least expensive way of dealing with crime in terms of human suffering, money and effort;
- public trust and confidence in the police have fallen and it is essential that it is rebuilt.

It was felt that interaction with the public should take place at a young age and a number of successful events in Barrow were highlighted.

Whilst the Panel welcomed the successful Mini Police scheme concerns were raised regarding the lengthy waiting times to join this. The Commissioner emphasised the success of this scheme and whilst acknowledging the concerns regarding waiting times informed members this was resource intensive but assured the Panel it would continue to be rolled out as quickly as possible.

The Panel was informed of a successful community project at the Sacred Hearts Community Hub in Barrow highlighting that any additional funding to make the building more accessible would be very much appreciated.

The Chair drew attention to anti-social behaviour at Portland Walk, Barrow and asked if funding would be available to provide CCTV in the area. The Panel was informed that CCTV had been investigated as part of the Safer Streets scheme in Barrow and that a bid had been made to the Prosperity Fund which would allow CCTV to be expanded.

A discussion took place regarding the proposed future of fire governance arrangements and members raised their concerns and disappointment that the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner had been excluded from discussions regarding this matter. The Commissioner informed the Panel that intervention had now taken place with Government and highlighted the need to be satisfied that the correct provision was in place to ensure this was successful and that the residents of Cumbria had the appropriate fire service.

During the course of discussion the Panel suggested that, depending on the outcome of the Home Secretary, additional training and development regarding fire governance be made available to members.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Panel will be held on Friday 14 October 2022 at Conference Room A/B, Cumbria House, Botchergate, Carlisle, CA1 1RD at 10.30 am.

The meeting ended at 12.00 pm