

Public Document Pack



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL HELD AT PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL ON 30 JULY 2014

Members Present: Councillors McGuire (Chair), Ablewhite (Vice Chair), Oliver, Shelton, Herbert, Shellens, Reeve, Fletcher and Over.

Officers Present: Paulina Ford Peterborough City Council
Andy Barringer Peterborough City Council

Others Present: Sir Graham Bright Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner
Brian Ashton Deputy Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner
Dr Dorothy Gregson Chief Executive, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
Robert Vickers Interim Chief Finance Officer
Anna Horne Head of Communications and Engagement

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Tom Hunt and Councillor Julia Davidson. Apologies were also received from Christine Graham.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were given.

3. Minutes of the meeting held 19 June 2014

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2014 were agreed as an accurate record and the action points were noted.

1. Public Questions

Two public questions had been submitted to the Panel and are attached at Appendix 1 of the minutes. Any responses given to those questions presented by persons not in attendance are also included in the attachment. Those not in attendance would receive written responses and the questions and answers would be published on the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel website under the appropriate meeting.

2. Complaints Report

The Panel received a report which provided an update on any complaints made against the Police and Crime Commissioner.

ACTION

The Panel noted that no complaints had been received against the Police and Crime Commissioner or his Deputy since the last report received.

3. Co-opted Member Recruitment Update

The Panel received a report which provided an update on the vacancy for the Co-opted Member. The Panel were asked to review and agree the job advertisement and whether there were any additional key skills or experience that should be considered for the role of Co-opted Member.

Observations and comments raised by the Panel included:

- Consideration should be given to increasing the diversity of the Panel.
- The list of competencies required for the role seemed extensive.
- The selection process should be on merit. The criteria and competencies required which had been listed were extremely important as it was an important role.

ACTION

The Panel noted the report and agreed to the job advertisement and associated documents.

4. Rules of Procedure

The Chair introduced the report which sought agreement from the Panel to revisions made to the Rules of Procedure which had been discussed at the Annual Meeting of the Panel held on 19 June 2014. In accordance with paragraph 1.4 of the Rules of Procedure the Rules of Procedure had been reviewed at its Annual Meeting.

The Chair advised the Panel that further consideration had since been given to the Public Participation section of the Rules of Procedure following a question received from Mr Richard Taylor and that the following additional revisions should be considered by the Panel:

Under paragraph 8, Work Programme the following additional wording to be added:

Suggestions from Members of the Public for items of Scrutiny by the Panel

8.2 Members of the public may submit suggestions for items of scrutiny to the Panel in writing by letter, facsimile transmission or by electronic mail to the Secretariat **not later than 12 noon, five working days before the day of the Panel meeting (not including the day of the meeting itself)**. Each suggestion must give the name and address of the person submitting the suggestion. The suggested item for scrutiny will be considered at the next meeting of the Panel under the item on the Agenda called Meeting dates and Agenda Plan.

Under paragraph 12, **PCC and Others Giving Account** the following additional wording to be added:

12.9 Any follow up responses received in writing from the Police and Crime Commissioner that are requested to matters raised during meetings of the Panel will be published on the Panels website.

The Chair asked the Panel if they were in agreement with the revisions and that the additional proposed revisions as tabled at the meeting could be accepted at the meeting for

immediate implementation. The Panel agreed unanimously to the revisions within the report and the tabled revisions.

Members of the Panel wished to record thanks to Mr Richard Taylor for his suggestions to improve Public Participation.

Mr Robert Davies, a member of the public and resident of Cambridge was in attendance and raised the following points to the Panel:

- He felt that the current process for Public Participation was too bureaucratic and would not encourage engagement with the public.
- The Panel might like to consider further how they will engage with members of the public.
- The process for public participation needed to be simple.
- Members of the public may wish to ask questions which were not part of the agenda, how would this be accommodated.
- How does the Police and Crime Commissioner hold the Chief Constable to account for the performance of the teams of police that are provided from more than one force e.g. the Major Crime Unit which is staffed by three police forces? *The Chair advised Mr Davies that accountability was a matter of public record and the information could be found on the Police and Crime Commissioners website. The question asked could be presented to the Panel under the item Public Questions as per the Rules of Procedure, Public Participation section 7, paragraph 7.3. By submitting the question in this manner it would allow time for a comprehensive answer to be given.*

ACTION

1. The Panel agreed unanimously to accept the revisions as presented in the Rules of Procedure.
2. The Panel also agreed unanimously to the additional wording to the Rules of Procedure as tabled at the meeting which referred to paragraph 8, Work Programme and paragraph 12, PCC and Others Giving Account.

5. Interim Chief Finance Officer Arrangements

The Police and Crime Commissioner introduced the report which provided the Panel with an update on the interim Chief Finance Officer arrangements until a permanent appointment is made and in post.

Responses by the Commissioner to questions from the Panel included:

- It was a difficult post to fill and there had been no success so far.
- There was no confirmed timescale for appointment yet.

ACTION

The Panel noted the report

6. Decisions by the Commissioner

The Panel received a report to enable it to review or scrutinise decisions taken by the Police and Crime Commissioner under Section 28 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. The Panel was recommended to indicate whether it would wish to further review and scrutinise the decisions taken by the Police and Crime Commissioner taken since the previous Panel meeting.

Responses by the Commissioner to questions from the Panel included:

- The Shrievalty scheme was also known as the Bobby Scheme.
- Members referred to the decision to approve the work with Hinchingsbrooke Health Care NHS Trust on a feasibility study for a joint property scheme on surplus land at Force HQ and sought clarification regarding the perception that the police would be moving their Headquarters out of Huntingdon. The Commissioner advised that there was no intention to move the Headquarters from Huntingdon. Various options were being considered but there would still be a presence in Huntingdon.
- The next step from the feasibility study would be to provide a delivery plan.

ACTION

The Panel noted the report and decisions that had been made by the Commissioner.

7. Commissioners Response to the HMIC Report on Cambridgeshire Constabulary's Approach to Tackling Domestic Abuse

The Commissioner introduced the report which provided the Panel with the Commissioner's response to Cambridgeshire Constabulary's response to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's Report *Cambridgeshire Constabulary's approach to tackling domestic abuse* 2014.

Responses by the Commissioner to questions from the Panel included:

- Issues of training of officers and reporting of domestic abuse had been resolved but there was room for improvement. Training was being conducted across the force and not just in the specialist units.
- Officers needed to understand the problem, how to recognise it and how to deal with it and this was all part of the training.
- HMIC criticism was targeted at the police force only but the criticism had meant that other agencies had taken notice. It was a single agency inspection of a multi-agency issue but there would be consideration of further multi-agency inspections in future.
- Engagement with other agencies had developed as time has gone on and was much better.
- It was difficult to get people to talk about the issues of domestic abuse. The Victims' Hub is working on how to give people the confidence to report an issue. There was an issue with consistency with those who reported domestic abuse as they often changed their mind later on. Body cameras were now being used and had been helpful in this area.
- Members were concerned about the use of community resolution to resolve domestic disputes. *The Commissioner advised that there were a variety of ways of resolving domestic disputes and this was just one of the options. There were ongoing discussions as to the level of community resolution there should be for domestic disputes.*

ACTION

The Panel noted the report.

8. Objective Two – Deliver Policing within the Available Budget

The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner introduced the report which updated the Panel on the progress made towards Objective Two of the Police and Crime Plan – Deliver Policing within the Available Budget. Members were informed that the budget had been cut over the last two years by £8.6M and going forward over the next three years a further £12M was likely to be removed from the budget. The average income available to the police per head of population in Cambridgeshire is nominally 25% lower than the national average however

there had been a reduction of recorded crime in Cambridgeshire over the last three years of 21% compared to the national average of 14%. The Commissioner was committed to maximising the capacity on the front line.

Responses by the Deputy Commissioner and the Commissioner to questions from the Panel included:

- Regarding Programme Metis - the Chief Constable was working with Microsoft to develop a system which was more flexible and capable. Collaboration was also taking place across the whole of the Eastern Region including Norfolk, Suffolk and Kent to introduce further software to enable each force to talk to each other making the delivery of service faster and more efficient.
- Members commented on the lack of police presence in rural areas.
- Programme Metis would ensure a greater community presence of police officers and greater visibility of police by a significant amount.
- There were vacancies advertised for special constables who were volunteers but they often moved on into the police force.
- The cost of running the constabulary was nearly two thirds of the budget therefore retaining the front-line services meant larger cuts in other areas. Budgets were not based on population.
- The priority was keeping the people of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough safe, delivering value for money and an efficient service.
- Members noted that there had been a underspend of £3.4M which would be used to smooth the impact of future funding reductions and wanted to know if this had gone into reserve. *The Panel were advised that it was an in year saving and had gone to reserves and sat under two headings. One was as a buffer against future pressures and the other covered expenditure if unexpected additional work needed to be done.*

ACTION

The Panel noted the report.

9. Holding to Account

The Commissioner introduced the report. The purpose of the report was to demonstrate to the Panel how the Commissioner holds Cambridgeshire Constabulary to account for force performance, ensuring value for money and engaging with local people.

Responses by the Commissioner to questions from the Panel included:

- Panel members requested a visit to the 101 Call Centre to gain a better understanding of the challenges. *The Commissioner welcomed the suggestion and advised that a visit could be arranged.*
- A member expressed concern about the amount of recoding and reclassifying of crimes so that they do not get picked up in the police statistics.
- Panel members wanted to know how the Commissioner held Chief Constables to account from outside of the area where collaborative work was being undertaken. *The Commissioner advised that he would hold his own Chief Constable to account who would then in turn hold the other Chief Constables to account.*
- Members commented that the public were confused with regard to the new Anti-Social Behaviour Act and wanted to know if the police force had any plans to introduce information leaflets or literature explaining the Act in a way the public could understand. *The Commissioner advised that once the consultation had finished a report could be brought to the Panel on new Anti-Social Behaviour Act.*
- Serious crime cases were dealt with in a more effective and efficient way through the collaborative working of the serious crime unit where joint forces were used.

ACTION

The Panel noted the report and requested that the Commissioner arrange a visit for the Panel to the 101 Call Centre.

10. Update on Progress for Implementation of the Victims' Hub

The Commissioner introduced the report which provided an update on the work to develop and implement a police-led Victims' Hub in Cambridgeshire that will deliver a victim services and referral mechanism and provide a gateway for the integrated management of victims of crime. Members were informed that the Victims' Hub was an innovation and put victims first and protected the vulnerable. The scheme had been funded by the Home Office. The Hub will be in shadow operation from September and full operation from October 2014.

Responses by the Commissioner to questions from the Panel included:

- The Victims Hub works with the Multi Agency Referral Unit (MARU) and the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to ensure no one falls between the gaps. There is some geographic and managerial co-location around the victim's hubs.
- Members were concerned that people may be put off going to the Victims' Hub as it was being run by the police and requested that this be monitored. *The Commissioner did not feel that there would be a problem but this would be monitored once the Hub was up and running.*
- Members requested more detailed data and statistics when providing reports.

ACTION

The Panel noted the report.

11. Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel Annual Report

The Panel received the annual report and thanked officers for producing the report.

ACTION

The Panel noted the report and requested that it be distributed to all of the authorities represented on the Panel and the relevant community safety partnerships.

12. Meeting Dates and Agenda Plan 2014-2015

The Panel received and noted the agenda plan including dates and times of future meetings.

ACTION

The Panel agreed that the following items be included on the Agenda Plan:

- Community Remedies and the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

The Chair raised the issue of holding the Panel meetings at other venues and asked for Members views on holding the meetings at other authorities' offices. Consideration was given to the time of day and where the meetings were held and to the extent to which the meetings were advertised. After a short discussion it was agreed that some meetings would be held at alternative local authority offices. Panel members would contact the secretariat to confirm if they were able to hold a meeting at their authority.

ACTION

Panel members to contact the secretariat if they are able to hold a future meeting of the Panel at their authority.

ACTIONS

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	ACTION	UPDATE
30 July 2014	Holding to Account	The Panel noted the report and requested that the Commissioner arrange a visit for the Panel to the 101 Call Centre.	Members of the Panel visited the 101 centre during on 15, 22 and 23 October 2014.
	Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel Annual Report	The Panel noted the report and requested that it be distributed to all of the authorities represented on the Panel and the relevant community safety partnerships.	Report distributed to all authorities represented on the Panel and the relevant community safety partnerships.
	Meeting Dates and Agenda Plan 2014-2015	The Panel to receive a report on Community Remedies and the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.	Programmed in for 28 January 2015 meeting.
		Panel members to contact the secretariat if they are able to hold a future meeting of the Panel at their authority.	The following meetings have been confirmed at the following venues: Wednesday 5 November, 2pm Huntingdon District Council, Civic Suite 1a Wednesday 28 January 2015 BUDGET MEETING Cambridge City Council, The Committee Rooms Wednesday 18 March 2015 South Cambridgeshire District Council, Council Chamber

The meeting began at 2.00pm and ended at 4.15pm

CHAIRMAN

Appendix 1

Question/s for Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel Meeting held on 30 July 2014

Questioner	Richard Taylor
Questions addressed to which Member of the Panel	Question 1 - Chairman Question 2 - Chairman
Date Question was submitted	23 July 2014
Question 1 At the last meeting of the panel I asked: "Why are the Police and Crime Commissioner's replies to the Police and Crime Panel's requests for written responses to matters raised during panel meetings not routinely published by the panel and considered by subsequent panel meetings?" Chairman Cllr McGuire' reply was: "My response to that is that I understand a response was recorded in the minutes and was followed up in writing to the panel and I believe a written response was also conveyed to Mr Taylor". This reply can be seen at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBlrJu14_zQ&t=25m22s I note this element of the reply is not contained in the proposed minutes for the meeting held on the 19th of June 2014. I would like to ask if the chairman, or acting chairman, still maintains that the responses from the commissioner were recorded in the minutes as he claimed, or if on reflection he agrees they were not? The fact a response was received was recorded in the minutes; but the response itself was not and it was clear my question related to the substance of the commissioner's responses. I note this was the question I was in the process of putting as a supplementary question to the panel when the panel abruptly terminated the public question slot before the question could be put and a response provided. I had pointed the panel to my successful Freedom of Information Act request for two of the Commissioner's written responses and noted I had received the information; rather than being given a refusal on the grounds of the information being already published as I would have expected had the responses actually been proactively published by the panel as claimed. The FOI request can be viewed at: https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/police_and_crime_commissioners_w I note that while the chairman noted the panel's terms of reference could be amended to require the proactive publication of written responses to the panel from the Police and Crime Commissioner that amendment is not one of those included in the papers for the July 2014 panel meeting.	

I see the proposed minutes for the 19th of June 2014 meeting include a statement that "Written responses to the Panel would also be published on the website". While this statement was not made at the meeting, if that is the intent of the panel I suggest including such a statement within the rules of procedure. I note I suggested that the panel considers the responses from the commissioner at subsequent meetings of the panel.

I am disappointed the proposed amendments to the rules of procedure before the panel do not include extending the scope of the public questions agenda item to allow members of the public to make statements and in particular to enable members of the public to suggest items for the panel to scrutinise.

Answer

The Panel did receive a response in writing from the Police and Crime Commissioner and this was noted in the action update section of the 5 February 2014 minutes. It was subsequently published under F.O.I.

The Panel agree with Mr Taylor and will amend the Rules of Procedure and publish follow up responses received in writing from the Police and Crime Commissioner that are requested to matters raised during meetings of the Panel. An amendment to the Rules of Procedure at section 12.0, 'PCC and others giving account' will be made to reflect this.

Regarding the Public Questions agenda item and extending the scope to allow members of the public to make statements and in particular to enable members of the public to suggest items for the panel to scrutinise.

I believe this is already covered in the Rules of Procedure but just to be absolutely clear additional wording will be added at section 8, 'Work Programme' of the Rules of Procedure.

The Panel thank you for highlighting these areas for consideration.

Question 2

I would like to ask the chairman or acting chairman, what the recommendations of the panel's working party which met on 15 May 2014 were and if they will be formally reported to the panel?

I note a member of the working party, Cambridge representative Cllr Tim Bick published an expectation that "some focused scrutiny sessions" would be recommended by the working party to the panel:

<https://twitter.com/CllrTimBick/status/474494359841566720>

I was surprised not to see a series of proposals for the proactive scrutiny of aspects of the Commissioner's work which the commissioner has not volunteered to report to the panel for scrutiny put to the June 2014 meeting of the panel.

Cllr Bick has suggested to the panel that call answering performance decisions might be one of the first subjects the panel wishes to proactively scrutinise given they were the first decisions the Police and Crime Commissioner reported to the public of Cambridgeshire even though the commissioner is yet to report any decisions on this subject to the panel for scrutiny.

I am interested in finding out if the Centre for Public Scrutiny was invited to take part in the working party as panel agreed they would be in March 2014 and what contribution, if any, they have made.

I note that had the working party been set up as a "task group" section 10.1 of the panel's rules of procedure would have required it to report back with a report and recommendations to the panel. I hope this loophole can be addressed when the rules of procedure are reviewed.

Given deciding what areas of the commissioners work ought be subject to detailed scrutiny is a key part of the panel's work I would rather such discussions take place in public at full panel meetings.

Answer

The working party was not a Task and Finish Group but an informal working party which met once on 15 May 2014 to discuss the agenda plan for 2014/2015 and consider items for scrutiny by the Panel. The Centre for Public Scrutiny was invited to attend but was unable to send someone on that particular date. However guidance was provided through phone conversations with an expert adviser from the CfPS. The outcome of the meeting is the current agenda plan that was presented at the Annual meeting on 19 June 2014.