



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CAMBRIDGESHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL
ON 2 FEBRUARY 2022**

Members Present:	Edward Leigh (Chair), Councillors S Bywater, A Bradnam, A Collis, C Daunton, S Ferguson, A Sharp, S Warren, and Claire George.	
Officers Present:	Paulina Ford Fiona McMillan	Secretariat, Peterborough City Council Monitoring Officer, Peterborough City Council
Others Present:	Darryl Preston John Peach Nick Dean Jim Haylett Jon Lee Matthew Warren	Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner Chief Constable, Cambridgeshire Constabulary Chief Executive OPCC Director of Finance and Resources, Cambridgeshire Constabulary Chief Finance Officer, OPCC

40. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Tierney, Ali, Hogg, and Lynn

41. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Bradnam declared an interest by way of the proposed new police hub near Milton Park and Ride was situated in her ward.

42. Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 November 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2021 were agreed as an accurate record.

43. Commissioner's Response to Recommendations

Councillor Bradnam asked if an update had been received regarding central funding for domestic homicide reviews. The Commissioner explained that his office had not been in direct contact with the Home Office but was in consultation with the Association of Police Crime Commissioners (APCC) and he would report back when an update had been received. The Commissioner advised holding off writing to the Home Office until the update was received.

44. Public Questions/Statements

No public questions or statements were received.

45. Review of Complaints

No complaints have been received since the last report.

ACTION

The Panel **AGREED** to note the report

46. Precept Report 2022/23

The Panel received a report on the proposed policing precept element of the Council Tax precept for 2022/23. The Panel were recommended to review and make a report or recommendation on the proposed precept.

The Commissioner and his staff presented the information contained within the report to the Panel.

The Panel made comment, asked questions, and received responses from the Commissioner, and his staff regarding the proposed precept, these included:

- 1) Edward Leigh thanked the Commissioner and his staff for the pre-brief, presentation, and detailed, in-depth explanation of the medium-term financial strategy review. He reminded panel members that their role was not to scrutinise the financial strategy but to scrutinise the Commissioner's proposal to increase the precept by £9.99 (for a Band D property).
- 2) Councillor Bradnam asked what amount of investment/effort had been allocated to the retention of constables further than the average of five to six years. The Commissioner confirmed that he had been assured that "value for money" was being achieved. The Chief Constable added that everything possible was done to retain staff; there were just under 300 applicants on the waiting list to join the force, recruitment was consistent, and applicants were vetted for resilience and the continuous professional unit had built up many HR professionals and Health and Wellbeing personnel involved in a substantial Health and Wellbeing Service within the organisation.
- 3) Councillor Bradnam asked how many PCSOs did the planned expenditure of £1.8million equate to in 2022/23 and did the increase in funding in 2025/26 equate to more PCSOs or just cover inflation? The Commissioner explained this was an operational question; although PCSOs were highly valuable members of staff, there were other police staff (call handlers, scenes of crime officers) and these would all be included within the list in question and were all extremely important in supporting the organisation. As 80% of the cost of the organisation consisted of staff costs, this would be where any further savings would have to be made. The Chief Constable stated he had previously had to make some tough decisions based on the financial sustainability of the force's future which unfortunately had resulted in a 50% reduction in PCSOs across the county (from 80 to 40). There were currently 32 PCSOs, another 11 took the decision to transfer to the role of a constable last year and the Chief Constable stated that if any of those 11 wanted to return to their community roles as a constable, with their neighbourhood knowledge, then he would ensure that this would happen, many had taken up this offer. Vacancies had been left open, to ensure that any of those that had transferred to constable, would have a job as a PCSO, if they decided being a Constable had not been the correct choice. None of those who had transferred had wanted to go back and therefore the Chief Constable would be filling the 8 posts shortly. The increase in budget between 2022/23 and 2025/26 reflected inflationary costs and not an increase in the number of PCSOs.
- 4) Councillor Daunton asked if not having the funding to retain 82 officers, was a national problem or had Cambridgeshire been particularly hard-hit. The Commissioner stated his focus was on Cambridgeshire and not the national picture, but Cambridgeshire only received 56% of its

funding from central government and the rest from the precept, which was a half/half split, and therefore it was important that he made a compelling case to government about future funding. He stated he was not aware of any other Police and Crime Commissioner who had not gone to their panels asking for full flexibility on the precept.

- 5) Councillor Daunton asked for reassurance that there would be sufficient funding for the training in ethical policing for young recruits. The Commissioner explained that ethical policing was one of his top priorities in the Police and Crime Plan, as was it one of the Chief Constable's. The Chief Constable confirmed that the Continued Professional Development Unit support officers within their first year of training, which included the values of policing. The national agenda around Violence Against Women and Girls had brought increased scrutiny around integrity, vetting, professional standards, and significant investment had been placed in this area of business to ensure those with the right values entered the organisation and maintained standards of professional conduct and if these were breached, then there were methods in place to deal with these.
- 6) Councillor Daunton asked if the financial settlement would allow for the continued improvement of the 101 service. The Commissioner explained he knew there was work in progress and he would be holding the Chief Constable to account over this issue. The Chief Constable explained there were approximately 400 999 calls daily to the service and 1,000/1,4000 101 calls and 120 webchats per day. Investments had been made, with additional call takers set up in the demand hub and calls had increased, these were all triaged and assessed for risk.
- 7) Councillor Sharp commented he was pleased to see the budget had been balanced without the use of the reserves, which had been used in previous years. He was aware that the finances were tight and therefore the Panel should support the Commissioner regarding further funding for the force. The Commissioner stated a significant piece of work would be done to make the case for further funding and a fairer settlement, of which he would call on the panel for support when the time came.
- 8) Councillor Bywater commented that the OPCC had given considerable evidence to support the increase in precept. How comfortable was the Commissioner with a wage inflation figure of 3.5% given the budgetary impact if it were to jump to 5%. The Chief Finance Officer stated he believed that 3.5% was the correct estimate, there would be more pressure as the year progressed, but the budget was a prudent one that would be kept under observation.
- 9) Councillor Bradnam commented on the response to the Commissioner's survey, of which there were 1566 responses (more than the previous year), this was an exceedingly small proportion of the population that had responded to the survey. Councillor Bradnam stated that there was a need to be mindful in future to try to increase the engagement and therefore asked for the Panel to be included in the setting of questions, where the survey was publicised and how it might be presented to residents, to receive better engagement next year. The Commissioner stated the OPCC worked hard on the survey and there must be more that could be done, and he would commit to progressing this. He would welcome any suggestions, views, comments, ideas, from anyone as he would really appreciate more responses to the survey.
- 10) Edward Leigh stated the Panel would have ideas and suggested that a workshop should be held for a discussion with the Panel. The Commissioner stated he was also concerned around the diversity of responses, there was a need to reach younger people. Councillor Bradnam asked if the Commissioner had gone into schools. The Commissioner explained that he had visited colleges, schools, gone online, although had not specifically asked them to fill in the survey.
- 11) Councillor Collis asked if the engagement with minority ethnic communities and travellers could be looked at, as these figures were particularly low. The Commissioner agreed and was happy to listen to any recommendations as to how to do this.

- 12) Edward Leigh thanked the Commissioner for including a list of acronyms and stated this should be a standing item in the agenda, as it was extremely helpful, especially for newer members of the panel.
- 13) Edward Leigh commented that the OPCC were undertaking to analyse the feedback from the survey. One question around perception of how safe a resident felt, 21% had selected “very unsafe” to “pretty unsafe”, this was alarming and suggested that a significant number of residents were living in fear, which warranted deeper analysis.
- 14) Edward Leigh asked if there were now more officers, would there be a need for less overtime or was there an expectation to a commitment to overtime within an officer’s contract. The Chief Constable explained that there was no expectation that overtime would be needed but it would be expected that the amount of overtime would decrease as the officer numbers increased. The actual offences, incidents and crimes that were investigated were becoming far more complex, pulling together a file of sufficient quality and depth for Crown Prosecution Service had increased, in turn, increasing the workload of an officer. Policing had also become a national mutual aid organisation with Cambridgeshire having supplied officers to COP26, G7, protests, demonstrations, Black Lives Matter, climate change and some of these at noticeably short notice, which incurred overtime.
- 15) Edward Leigh asked for clarification of the timescale regarding the work the Commissioner had commissioned on future funding, of which he would like the Panel’s support. The Commissioner explained that the work had started, a business case was being prepared and a meeting with the Home Office had been arranged in early March. The Commissioner agreed he would share the business case with the members of the Panel to enable them to feed into the process. Edward Leigh asked if this would be a private briefing to enable the Commissioner to give an update and the panel members to give an informal steer on it, to which members agreed, the Commissioner welcomed this.

The Panel unanimously **AGREED** to **NOT** exercise its veto power over the precept increase proposed by the Commissioner.

47. Decisions by the Police and Crime Commissioner

The Panel received a report in response to a recommendation from the Panel meeting of 15 November 2021 as follows:

“The Panel **AGREED** that it would like to receive advance notification of key areas of decision making (particularly in transformation) and asked that the OPCC (Office of Police and Crime Commissioner) bring a new recommendation on this back to the next Panel meeting.”

The Monitoring Officer for the Panel, Fiona McMillan, stated the local government statutory guidance regarding the Panel working with the Commissioner, “it is important for the Panel to develop its work programme in conjunction with the Commissioner’s office, drawing on the Commissioner’s forward plan. This liaison enables the panel to focus on key matters in more timely ways with access to the necessary briefings and reports. It also ensures that enough time is built in for the panel to add value to its work through more in-depth scrutiny in addition to the special functions its capacity allows. The panel should communicate with the Commissioner and his/her office to find out if there are any areas where assistance and support might be helpful.”

Edward Leigh explained the panel wished to have a simplified forward plan that focused on key areas of decision making/actions that related to delivery of the Police and Crime Plan or related to a matter

that had arisen since the formation of the Police and Crime Plan; this would give the panel time to plan commission of reports and questioning.

The Chief Executive for the OPCC, Jim Haylett, responded stating that to work with the Panel, on a rolling basis at each Panel meeting, the OPCC would give an indication of the areas being worked on across the Police and Crime Plan and the office, for the following six months; this would enable the panel to have a view of future work. It had already been agreed that twice yearly the Panel would receive a comprehensive report on what has been delivered (the annual report and a six-month interim report), and forward plan reports would effectively give the panel foresight of what the OPCC would be working on, and he hoped that this would cover the expectations of the panel.

Jim Haylett gave an example, regarding the theme “supporting victims and witnesses,” the OPCC would be:

- refreshing the Domestic Abuse and Serious Sexual Partnership Strategy in the next quarter,
- recruiting a Victims Policy Officer, reviewing of provisions for victims of crime requiring mental health support,
- recommissioning of specialist support services for young victims of crime
- Remodelling for provision of elements of domestic abuse support services in partnership with the local authority
- Review of the Victims Hub

Edward Leigh stated this was exactly what the Panel was looking for and asked for this to be a standing item on the agenda but looking at a flexible six to nine months ahead to facilitate agenda planning for panel meetings.

The Panel **AGREED** to the following recommendation:

- *That a simplified forward plan from the OPCC become a standing item on the Panel's agenda. This forward plan should cover the following six to nine months to allow for meeting dates and themes.*

48. Meeting Dates and Agenda Plan 2021/22

Forthcoming Meeting Dates:
 16th February 2022 – if needed
 23rd March 2022

	ITEM	ACTION
1.	Precept Report 2022/23	The Panel unanimously AGREED to NOT exercise its veto power over the precept increase proposed by the Commissioner.
2.	Decisions by the Police and Crime Commissioner	The Panel AGREED to the following recommendation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>That a simplified forward plan from the OPCC become a standing item on the Panel's agenda. This forward plan should cover the following six to nine months to allow for meeting dates and themes.</i>

The meeting began at 1:30pm and ended at 4:00 pm

CHAIRPERSON

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