

**CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES** of the Meeting of the **CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

held on **24 JULY 2018**

**PRESENT:** Councillor P Shepherd - Chairman of the Council  
G Harris - Vice-Chairman of the Council

Councillors:	D Bray	P Martin
	J Burton	V Martin
	J Cook	D Phillips
	E Culverhouse	N Rose
	I Darby	J Rush
	M Harker	M Smith
	P Hudson	D Varley
	C Jackson	E Walsh
	C Jones	J Waters
	R J Jones	C Wertheim

A minutes silence was observed in memory of former Councillor and Honorary Alderman Ian Gomm who passed away on 9 June 2018.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Councillors A Bacon, M Flys, C Ford, A Garth, J Gladwin, M Harrold, P Jones, J MacBean, S Patel, C Rouse, M Shaw, L Smith, M Stannard, M Titterington, N Varley, H Wallace, F Wilson and N Southworth

The Chairman welcomed Anthony Stansfeld Police and Crime Commissioner, Francis Habgood (Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police) and LPA Commander Superintendent Neil Kentish to the meeting.

**109 PRESENTATION FROM THE CHIEF CONSTABLE**

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), Anthony Stansfeld, gave a presentation to Council on the role and responsibilities of a PCC and an overview of crime in the Thames Valley area. A PCC's responsibilities included but were not limited to, holding the Chief Constable to account for policing, developing a Police & Crime Plan for the area, engaging with local communities and supporting services who support victims of crime and restorative justice. It was noted that, with a population of 2.3 million and comprising of 18 local authorities, the Thames Valley area has the largest non-metropolitan police force in the country.

In relation to recorded crime for the area, the PCC advised Members that Thames Valley saw recorded crime increase by 8.7% compared with 15%

nationally in 2017 – 2018, however overall crimes levels in Thames Valley remained low. It was noted that recorded violence and possession of weapons offences had increased by 12.5% and 12.8% respectively in the area, although these figures were significantly lower when compared with national increases.

Members were informed that Victims First, a service created by the office of the PCC, was a free service that provides emotional and practical support to victims and their families, as well as witnesses of crime. A number of specialist services were also available for victims of sexual violence and domestic abuse.

Chief Constable Francis Habgood QPM then gave a presentation to Members on policing operations and top priorities, as well as further information on recorded crime and trends for the Thames Valley area.

The Chief Constable informed Members of recent significant policing operations which included the royal wedding and the visit by the President of the United States, the latter of which involved the largest ever deployment of Thames Valley Police (TVP) officers. Members were advised of the top priorities for the area which included 101 and 999 call handling, burglary, domestic abuse, and harassment and social media.

The volume of 101 and 999 calls coming in had increased within the past year. Members were informed that 101 handling capacity had proved challenging due to a shortage of staff but officers were working hard to improve the answering time. At present, the average answering time of 101 calls is 2 minutes.

It was noted that the number of residential burglaries had recently decreased in the Chiltern area although this was still a top priority for officers. A 35% increase in residential burglary was largely owing to a single series and ongoing investigation to which the two offenders had been charged with 11 burglaries.

Officers were analysing what increases in crime were due to changes in recording crime. It was reported that there had been an increase in assaults on police officers which may have been due to officers recording abuses where previously they had not.

In relation to anti-social behaviour, officers were working with local shop owners to report any anti-social behaviour to may see – 'shop watch'. It was noted that the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) recently approved by Members was helping officers to tackle anti-social behaviour around car parks. The Chief Constable thanked Members for their recent work around domestic abuse to support people at risk. Members were advised that this year there had been no unauthorised encampments in the Chiltern area. A recent protocol between TVP, Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils and Bucks

County Council approved by Members has proved useful in setting out clearly the responsibilities of each organisation when dealing with unauthorised encampments.

Following the presentation the Police and Crime Commissioner, Chief Constable and LPA Commander responded to Members' questions that had been submitted in advance.

Question 1 from Councillor Peter Jones (Ballinger, South Heath and Chartridge Ward): One of the most worrying problems for many of my residents, particularly the more elderly, is the constant nuisance of 'spam' and fraudulent emails (for those that have internet access), junk mail and particularly phone calls. Some of my residents tell me they are scared to pick up the phone as they fear it's going to be another call telling them their computer (which they don't have) is broken, or that they have won some money on a lottery they didn't enter. Or sometimes that they owe money for something they haven't bought. What more do you think that 'we' (police, council and public) can do to counter this menace?

In Councillor P Jones' absence, the Chairman asked the question on Councillors P Jones' behalf. Members were advised that an effective initial preventative measure was to install security software onto computers. It was noted that the cadets were working to help educate people in using computers and raising awareness of online fraudulent activity, as well as giving people the confidence to report this type of crime.

Question 2 from Councillor Des Bray (Chalfont St Giles and Jordans Ward): What actions are being taken to address the long response time in answering calls made to the non-emergency phone line?

Members noted that the volume of 101 and 999 calls had increased within the past year which had proved a challenge. Members were informed that TVP officers were in the process of recruiting call operators as there was a shortage in staff which has increased pressures on call operators. Pressures on operators were exacerbated during recent events when call volumes had increased, for example during the World Cup. The Chief Constable encouraged those with access to a computer to use the online reporting system so that telephone lines are freed up for those without computers or internet access. TVP were working to raise awareness regarding the nature of 101 calls, as some calls had been made enquiring about a service or information that could be accessed elsewhere.

The Chairman took questions 3, 4 and 5 together.

Question 3 from Councillor Liz Walsh (Amersham on the Hill Ward): The *Sunday Times* published on 17 June figures from a 'crime map' stating that

under 5% of all robberies and burglaries had been solved in the last 5 years. It was also stated on the BBC website on 19 June that 'Home Office figures suggest that only 9% of crimes end with suspects being charged or summonsed in England and Wales and that in the 12 months to March 2018, 443,000 crimes resulted in a charge or summons out of 4.6 million offences - the lowest detection rate since 2015. Data also shows police closed nearly half (48%) of all cases because no suspect could be identified.' Granted that these are national figures, nevertheless some of our residents might be alarmed. How can councillors explain to residents the facts behind these figures?

Question 4 from Councillor J Rush (Central Ward): South Bucks has one of the lowest solved crime rates in the country (4.4%) while Uttlesford in Essex has the best (26%). Why is South Bucks so bad? And why is the best, Uttlesford, still so poor, with 74 % unsolved?

Question 5 from Councillor Peter Martin (Little Chalfont Ward): We are hearing that nationally police resource is very stretched with a declining visible police presence on the street. Following a few incidents recently in Great Missenden, for example, a serious assault, a gang fight on the village green and drug dealing on the High Street how can we be reassured that residents have their interests protected especially in view of the significant increase in police precept this year.

Members were reassured that the Chiltern district was a very safe place to live and work, and Great Missenden in particular had some of the lowest levels of crime in the TVP area. It was noted that crime figures were continually analysed to assess priorities and performance against the national picture. In relation to residential burglaries, TVP officers were solving crime at higher rates than the national level. With regards to the national statistics published in the media, it was noted that the BBC statistics had been validated and these statistics took into account all types of crime. Members also noted that detection rates had dropped considerably. Members of the public were advised to be cautious of figures that were not validated but published by some media outlets.

Question 6 from Councillor Isobel Darby (Chalfont Common Ward): In the recent report in *The Times* newspaper regarding 10,000 police officers taking sick leave because of stress or anxiety, could you provide the figures for Thames Valley Police and specifically for Chiltern District? What impact has this had on policing in Chiltern District?

It was reported that internal and external support was offered to officers. TVP had some of the lowest levels of sick leave nationally, and the Chiltern and South Bucks local policing area (LPA) specifically had some of the lowest levels in the TVP as a whole. Attendance figures were regularly analysed to assess

what impact these might have on policing, and it was noted that long term sickness absence tended to skew overall figures.

The Chairman took questions 7 and 8 together.

Question 7 from Councillor Vanessa Martin (Great Missenden Ward): Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) play an important role in neighbourhood policing in areas such as Chiltern District, as they are the “eyes and ears” on the ground. How many PCSOs currently operate in Chiltern District and are there plans to increase this resource to help improve outcomes for residents in terms of improving convictions for crimes?

Question 8 from Councillor Caroline Jones (Amersham Common Ward): While appreciating the work being done on anti-social behaviour in the area I would like to know what further are being taken to curb this and if there are plans to employ more PCSOs?

It was noted that there were 11 Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) roles in total and although there had not been a reduction in PCSOs, there were currently PCSO vacancies. At present, there were no plans to increase the number of PCSOs due to financial constraints on the force. Neighbouring teams of PCSOs also support the Chiltern PCSOs, and help officers and the right organisations to problem solve any anti-social behaviour. Councillor C Jones thanked the Police and Crime Commissioner, Chief Constable and LPA Commander on behalf of residents for the recent increase in police presence in Amersham.

Question 9 from Councillor Emily Culverhouse (Hilltop and Townsend Ward): A recent newspaper report has stated that, ‘CCTV monitoring in the Wycombe district looks set to move to Milton Keynes following years of uncertainty’. Is this right and if so is there a timetable?

Members were informed that CCTV monitoring was planned to move to a centralised hub in Milton Keynes, and that the decision was due to be made within the coming weeks. The Chief Constable advised Members that due to technological advances, local CCTV monitoring was out of date and the new centralised system would allow for better coverage and use of cameras.

The Chairman took questions 10 and 11 together.

Question 10 from Councillor Jonathan Waters (Penn and Coleshill): In light of the disturbing increase in the number of knife and gun-related violent offences nationally, and in the Thames Valley region, what operational and preventative work is being carried out to prevent this type of crime?

Question 11 from Councillor Diana Varley (Little Missenden Ward): What level of threat is terrorism in the Chiltern area? For example, High Wycombe was at red for a while. What safety steps for the public are in place?

It was advised that preventative steps against this type of crime and the threat of terrorism were being taken, which included work being done in schools to educate young people. Targeted work was also being done relating to gang issues. Knife and gun crime and the threat of terrorism were reportedly very low in the area, however officers were not complacent and continually looked at intelligence.

A further question was asked by Councillor D Varley in relation to whether the closeness of certain towns to the M25 would impact levels of crime. It was advised that this was a possibility and that the TVP data analyst assesses and shares crime data across areas to spot cross border patterns specifically.

The Chairman thanked the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable for their presentations.

## **110 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Ordinary and Annual Council meetings held on 15 May 2018 were approved as a correct record.

## **111 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **112 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **(a) Chairman's Engagements**

A list of Engagements carried out by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council between 4 May 2018 and 13 July 2018 had been circulated.

### **(b) Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman had no announcements to make.

### **(c) Announcements from the Leader of the Cabinet**

The Leader of the Cabinet encouraged Members to attend a social media workshop. Two workshops were due to be held on Wednesday 25 July at 6.30pm at Amersham, and Wednesday 5 September at 6pm at Capswood respectively.

## **(d) Announcements from the Head of Paid Service**

The Chief Executive had no announcements to make.

## **(e) Petitions**

No petitions were submitted.

### **113 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL, IN DATE ORDER OF THE MEETING:**

### **114 COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES - GOVERNANCE & ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE - 27 JUNE 2018**

Full Council were asked to agree proposed changes to the Council Procedure Rules following consideration by the Governance & Electoral Arrangements Committee meeting on 27 June 2018. The proposed changes would enable the current practice of minuting committee meetings to continue, and provide an exemption to Members with a medical need from having to stand when speaking at Full Council.

It was proposed by Councillor D Varley, seconded by Councillor J Wertheim and

#### **RESOLVED:**

**That Council Procedure Rule 28.2 and 20.2, be amended as follows:**

#### **28.2 Application to Committees and Sub-Committees**

**(1) All of the Council rules of procedure apply to meetings of Full Council. Only Rules 4 to 8, 13, 14 (but not 14.4, 14.5 or 14.9), 16, 17(but not 17.3), 18 to 23 and 27.2 of these Procedural Rules apply to meetings of committees and sub-committees including the Overview Committees. Rule 9 also applies save that the quorum for any committee or sub-committee shall be determined by the relevant Terms of Reference set out in this Constitution.**

#### **20.2 Standing when speaking**

**When a Member speaks at Full Council he must stand and address the meeting through the Chairman, except where the Chairman has agreed prior to the meeting that a Member is not required to stand when they speak due to a disability which restricts their mobility. If more than one member stands, the Chairman will ask one to speak and the other must sit. Other members must remain seated whilst a member is speaking**

**unless they wish to make a point of order or a point of personal explanation.**

**115 CONTRACTS PROCEDURE RULES - AUDIT & STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

Full Council were asked to agree a number of changes to the Contracts Procedure Rules detailed in Appendix A. It was noted that the Audit and Standards Committee had discussed the proposed changes in full at their meeting on 16 July 2018.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the revised Contracts Procedure Rules contained in Appendix A be approved.**

**116 CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS**

**117 REFRESHED JOINT BUSINESS PLAN 2018-19**

Full Council were asked to consider and approve the refreshed Joint Business Plan 2018 – 2019 contained in Appendix 1, following consideration of the plan by both Overview Committees and Cabinet. Members noted that the Business Plan replaced the former aims and objectives document, and would be reviewed each year to reflect the changing needs of Chiltern's local communities.

The Leader expressed thanks to the Performance and Policy Officer and Communications Team for their hard work in overhauling the layout, look and length of the Business Plan to make the plan clear and accessible.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the refreshed Joint Business Plan be approved.**

**118 VERBAL REPORTS FROM THE LEADER, CABINET MEMBERS OR CHAIRMAN OF A COMMITTEE**

**Councillor P Martin – Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development**

Councillor P Martin confirmed that the National Planning Policy Framework had now been published and officers were in the process of reviewing the document.

**Councillor L Walsh – Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities**

Councillor L Walsh informed Members that applications for the Community Grant Aid Scheme 2017/19 were due to be considered week beginning 30 July 2018.

**119 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE (IF ANY)**

There were no questions.

**120 PETITIONS (IF ANY)**

No petitions were presented.

**121 JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS (IF ANY)**

There were no reports.

**122 MOTIONS (IF ANY)**

No Motions had been received.

**The meeting ended at 7.53 pm**