

# Minutes

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**Minutes of the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel held on Friday 3 February 2017, in Olympic Room Aylesbury Vale District Council Gatehouse Road Aylesbury Bucks HP19 8FF, commencing at 11.00 am and concluding at 1.41 pm.**

## **Members Present**

Councillor Julia Adey (Wycombe District Council), Councillor Patricia Birchley (Buckinghamshire County Council), Councillor Margaret Burke (Milton Keynes Council), Councillor Derek Sharp (Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead), Councillor Tony Illott (Cherwell District Council), Councillor Trevor Egleton (South Bucks District Council), Councillor Angela Macpherson (Aylesbury Vale District Council), Councillor Kieron Mallon (Oxfordshire County Council), Curtis-James Marshall (Independent Member), Councillor Iain McCracken (Bracknell Forest Council), Councillor Barrie Patman (Wokingham Borough Council), Councillor Dee Sinclair (Oxford City Council), Councillor Paul Sohal (Slough Borough Council), Councillor Quentin Webb (West Berkshire Council) and Councillor Ian White (South Oxfordshire District Council)

## **Officers Present**

Clare Gray

## **Others Present**

Matthew Barber (Deputy PCC), Francis Habgood (Thames Valley Police), Paul Hammond (Office of the PCC), Dr Louis Lee (Joint Independent Audit Committee), Anthony Stansfeld (PCC) and Ian Thompson (Office of the PCC)

## **Apologies**

Councillor Emily Culverhouse (Chiltern District Council), Julia Girling (Independent Member), Councillor Chris McCarthy (Vale of White Horse District Council), Councillor Tony Page (Reading Borough Council) and Councillor Carol Reynolds (West Oxfordshire District Council)

## **87. Declarations of Interest**

Cllrs Kieron Mallon and Iain McCracken declared an interest. Kieron Mallon as a Member of the Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service and Iain McCracken, the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority.

## **88. Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 December 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

As the Panel had not received a response to the recommendations of the Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation Sub-Committee they asked the PCC to respond:-

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH)

The PCC had been visiting the MASH across the Thames Valley and particularly mentioned the good work being undertaken in a number of the MASH's. He had one main concern which was the lack of an Education Sector presence in the Hubs which he felt was critical to their success. He also expressed concern about the number of MASH in Berkshire and commented that they were too small to be as effective as they should be. Whilst the MASH do interlink, there ideally needed to be two MASH in Berkshire. He would undertake a review of the MASH after one year.

#### Language Schools

The PCC commented that this really was an issue for schools and OFSTED as language schools were currently unregulated on some safeguarding issues. He had talked to MPs about this issue. He would write a letter to the Education Secretary raising this issue of language schools and also this issue and also the issue of safeguarding in academies copying in the Police and Home Secretary.

#### Taxi Licensing

Cllr Sinclair asked that the Thames Valley wide meeting be set up as soon as possible to look at current issues regarding taxi licensing.

Action: Scrutiny Officer

The Panel asked the PCC to provide a formal response to the recommendations of the Sub-Committee.

Action: PCC

### **89. Public Question Time**

There were no public questions.

### **90. Budget Task and Finish Group Report**

As in previous years, the Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel formed a Budget Task & Finish Group to assist in discharging its statutory duty to scrutinise the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Thames Valley's proposed council tax precept for 2017/18. Cllr McCracken, the Chairman of the Budget Task and Finish Group presented the report. He thanked Ian Thompson and Linda Waters for attending the Group and updating Members on the PCC's draft budget proposals and also Members of the Group for their work.

The Chairman particularly referred to the following points:-

- The Government's continued commitment that no police force will face a cash reduction in their overall funding providing they maximise their precept, places Thames Valley Police (TVP) in a better financial position than anticipated 18 months ago but still equates to a real terms cut in income.
- The medium term financial plan (MTFP) is balanced in all three years. This has only been possible through the identification of £21.54m of budget cuts. The draft budget requires £10.5m of productivity savings in 2017/18 with a further £11m in the following two years.
- The impact of the new national funding formula for the allocation of core police grants – at this stage it is not known what impact the new formula will have or what additional grant top slices will be taken from the police grant in 2018/19 and later years.
- Considerable uncertainty around the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Project (ESN) – PCCs will need to pay local ESN costs, including data and connection charges, devices and installation as well as control room upgrades supported by specific grants reallocated through the 'core-costs' top-slice. It was recommended that an additional £1m be added to the Medium Term Capital Plan for this purpose.
- The significant cost increases required and delay in timeline for the Contact Management Programme including the shortage of IT technical skills within the Force to deliver complex projects and the need to employ contractors.

- Budget allocation for cyber-crime bearing in mind the figures for this in the latest national crime survey and the financial impact of local Forces investigating high profile cases (with reference to the recent HBOS case where the Force spent £7 million investigating the case).
- The impact on police officer and staff numbers next year (2017/18) is a net reduction of 59 police officer posts and an increase of 22 police staff/PCSO posts.
- Concern over the National Police Transformation Fund which was intended to help police reform and that this could be a 'pump priming' measure to help Forces transition over to the new funding formula.

A recommendation had been put forward which was debated during the next item as follows:-

1. That the Panel approve the Police and Crime Commissioner's precept for 2017/18 as set out in the OPCC report 'Revenue Estimates 2017/18 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2017/18 to 2020/21' subject to satisfactory responses to the questions raised at Appendix B of the report and any other supplementary questions asked at the Panel meeting on 3 February 2016.
2. That the Panel add its support to the PCC if any representations need to be made to the Home Secretary with regards to the setting of the revised Funding Formula.

## **91. Scrutiny of the proposed precept - Questioning of the Police and Crime Commissioner**

The following questions were raised in relation to the proposed precept of the PCC:-

1. At the last meeting you were questioned on your 25 key objectives being deliverable. Please could you indicate how your budget supports your strategic priorities as follows:-
  - Vulnerability
  - Prevention and Early Intervention
  - Reducing Re-offending
  - Serious Organised Crime and Terrorism
  - Police Judgement and Reform

The PCC commented that the presentation format of the budget does not align with each individual priority in his Plan, but the Plan was a framework in which to prioritise his key objectives, the overall budget allocation to the Force and for commissioning other non-policing services. He gave an example of other costs that may be borne by the Force, which was the HBOS fraud case. His recent statement referred to the length and cost of the investigation, which has resulted in the case taking over 6 years to bring to court, 151 police officers and staff tied up in the investigation, and at a cost of more than £7m which has been borne by the householders of Thames Valley. The cost in time and money for a police force to take on a major fraud investigation is considerable and a judgement has to be made whether the £7m spent on this case, and police officer time, could have been better spent in pursuing other crimes, such as child sexual abuse, and the multitude of lower scale frauds perpetrated against smaller companies and the elderly.

There needs to be an agreed policy that if a major fraud is committed, and the Serious Fraud Office does not have the capacity to take it on, then the police force that investigates it is reimbursed by central government, or through a fine or costs imposed on the auditors, the bank and the offenders involved. In this case there does not appear to be a way to recompense Thames Valley Police and the Council Tax payers who part pay for their police force. The government should ensure that full restitution for the cost of prosecuting this case is made, and that every major fraud should be investigated. There is the Bellwin funding scheme which is designed to recompense authorities for the costs of emergency measures undertaken to safeguard life or property, or to prevent further suffering and inconvenience locally, during exceptional circumstances but authorities have to claim back this money. The special grant rules for the police require them to contribute 1% of the net budget before they can seek financial assistance from the Home Office.

The PCC also referred to a number of additional commitments which included the implementation of the new Apprentice Levy (£1.3m) and the Local Government Pension Scheme (£1.3m).

2. OPCC Risk 18 states the following 'with crime becoming ever more complex and challenging to investigate and demand in policing services increasing, the level of funding forecast for the next three years is insufficient to deliver the planned outcomes in the PCC Police and Crime Plan 2017 to 2021.' Yet you have stated that this budget supports the delivery of the Plan. Are you confident about delivery of your objectives ? How will you manage public and partner expectations in light of the 25 objectives above ?

The PCC referred to the response to the question above. He also clarified that the Risk Register presents simply a risk that the level of budget may be insufficient. To put this into context, the PCC mentioned that the MTFP requires revenue savings of at least £21.54m over the next three years, with £10.5m in 2017/18. This is over and above the £88.3m of cash savings already removed from the base budget in the last six years meaning that, over the nine year period 2011-2020, in excess of £109m will have been taken out of the base revenue budget. There was not enough funding to solve all priorities and funding for the South East was low compared to larger cities. There was also the unknown factor in the new funding formula which may be partly supported for a few years by the Police Transformation Fund.

3. Is the Force concerned about their capacity and capability to deal with cyber crime, terrorism, cse and complex crime bearing in mind there are risks around the retention and demand for specialist officers and trained detectives (plus changes in legislation which will make it less attractive for contractors to work for the public sector) which has not been allowed for within the MTFP?

The PCC reported that the Force was one of the best in dealing with cyber crime etc and the recent success with the major fraud case demonstrated this. He referred to the work of the SE Regional Organised Crime Unit and the SE Counter Terrorism Unit. With the current threat level for international terrorism in the UK being 'severe' the Unit were working hard to prevent terrorist attacks.

#### Revenue & capital

4. a) How does Thames Valley Police Force benchmark itself financially against similar Forces? (both in terms of grant budget received and areas of spend ).  
b) Hampshire (our collaboration partner) police's chief constable Olivia Pinkney and crime commissioner Michael Lane have written to government demanding more cash as they say they receive a quarter less funding than needed.
  - As they have a similar cash change 1.3% as Thames Valley will you be making any representations to the Government?
  - You have commented in your papers that the biggest area of concern is the assumption being made regarding future levels of government grant and precept income. As forward planning is more important than ever (key requirements of the Prudential Code for Capital Finance) are you comfortable with your contingency arrangements and use of reserves and balances ?

The PCC reported that Thames Valley Police Force benchmark well compared to other similar Forces. He referred to the Hampshire Chief Constable and PCC joining forces to highlight a funding shortfall which could severely impact the police force to Brandon Lewis the Minister of State. The PCC commented that Hampshire wanted to make their view known to the Minister and that he himself had tried to arrange a meeting with the Home Secretary. The police force were expected to do more with constrained budgets and were the place of last resort.

5. a) Please could the PCC provide an update of the Force Productivity Strategy and Priority Based Budgeting Review process.  
b) How confident are you of the ability of the Force's productivity strategy and Priority Based Budgeting to keep on delivering the savings you need and are you concerned that this will impact on the objectives of the Police and Crime Plan including the Chief Constable's annual delivery plan objectives ? What is the governance around the Productivity Strategy?  
c) What specific savings has the PCC made in the 2016/17 financial year? How were these savings justified and what has been the impact of these decisions on service delivery? In particular the Review of

Demand Led Operating Model has led to savings of £3.2m – please could you give a breakdown of how these savings will/have been achieved and impact on service delivery.

The PCC reported that productivity savings continue apace and that they were transforming service delivery. There were 28 initiatives which were being led by the Deputy Chief Constable and the information could be found in the agenda. The savings had been easier to achieve this year than the original forecast for last year. He was very confident that they could be achieved and commented that they only had a small forecast overspend on the current year's revenue budget at the moment. The productivity plan was key in driving through changes, especially the changes identified by the new demand led operating model and improved ICT systems and processes.

The new operating model had achieved savings by understanding demand and targeting resources so that they were in the right place at the right time. Improved processes have also been introduced in the way the force manages investigations, missing persons and in the processing of prisoners in custody and both of these initiatives have delivered efficiencies in terms of time, but also improved the quality of work officers are able to undertake because they are not being deployed to cover response incidents at the same time. Cultural changes have promoted and delivered a much more noticeable "one team ethos", and technological advances – particularly in the use of mobile devices have enabled a much more agile way of working with Officers who previously would have spent significant time in the Police Station, able to untie themselves from their desks and spend much more time in the community.

The PCC referred to the proposed changes to the governance of specialist policing capabilities delivered about the level of individual police forces, with a particular emphasis on collaboration. This was to enable major efficiencies but was causing some concern among police chiefs.

6. In your October report you said 'Should the Government review indicate that TVP may suffer a significant reduction in central grants then the recruitment and resourcing profile of the Force will need to be rapidly reviewed'. With current negotiations how likely do you think that this is to happen?

The PCC reported that they still had not been informed about the new funding formula but he was hopeful that it would not significantly impact the Force.

7. How do you scrutinise the budget to ensure value for money? How regularly do internal and external audit processes consider value for money? Please could you provide the Panel with an update on the audits being conducted into the criminal justice system and PCC Governance (which includes the effectiveness of the framework in holding the Force to account) and also the CCTV review

The PCC referred to the HMIC value for money review in which Thames Valley were graded 'good' so he was not concerned about this area. The PCC referred to the CCTV review and the recent media article which said that some Forces were not using CCTV as effectively as they could do. He commented that Thames Valley did use their CCTV more effectively than other Forces. He was talking to Local Authorities about CCTV as the use of it differed across the Thames Valley.

8. Under the Revenue Budget Summary you have other costs of £210,000 under PCC Controlled Expenditure – what does this include? Are you happy that with your possible increase in responsibilities that you have enough resources in your office to deliver effectively?

The PCC commented that this funding related to audit fees, corporate subscriptions, consultancies, treasury management, bank charges and custody visiting and that the cost of his office was one of the lowest in the Country.

9. Would the PCC or Chief Constable be able to say how many defibrillators will be deployed and is there an estimate on how many lives may be saved over the lifetime of the devices?

The PCC reported that some police cars did have defibrillators in them especially those where they were carrying firearms.

10. Do you feel that you have managed your property portfolio well in terms of selling properties at the right time in the market to gain the best possible capital receipts ?

The PCC commented that he was happy with the way the property portfolio was being managed.

11. Has any consultation been carried out on the budget as other PCCs have done?

The PCC reported that he was not going out to public consultation. He had followed Ministerial guidance on the level of council tax increases and had provided detail to the Panels Budget Task and Finish Group.

12. Community Safety Partnership Funding (Appendix 4 Current service) – will you be updating the formula allocation model before 2018/19 grant allocations are announced and how will you do this.

The PCC will inform the Panel when they undertake this exercise.

13. Can you see a change in responsibility by the public which is reducing demand on emergency services ? Have you any data on how your Demand and Vulnerability Model is reducing demand ?

The PCC referred to his previous comment on the new operating model and the fact that the Police were the service of last resort.

14. How will the Force work closely with partners to deliver cost savings when there is likely to be a withdrawal of partner funds with the public sector strain and the continued financial viability of the private sector e.g possible withdrawal of funds for the street triage scheme.

The PCC reported that he would continue to work with partners to deliver cost savings. However, as Local Authorities also had constrained budgets they had to sometimes make decisions that impinged on the police force which made their task more difficult.

15. The APCC Chair has welcomed the announcement that funding for victims' services in 2017/18 will be maintained at about the same level as 2016/17. In addition, they support the decision to repeat the £4.7m child sexual abuse fund. However they regret the decision to fund victims' services, once again, for only one year. As it stands PCCs are often unable to commission victims' services in the most effective way. As, importantly, service providers, including small charities who work hard to deliver services for some of the most vulnerable people in society, are unable to plan ahead and make the necessary strategic decisions. What do you think about this statement and are you able to put any plans in place for long term funding for domestic abuse and other key areas ? Will the Service Transformation fund for Violence against Women and Girls provide enough financial support to meet the level of demand for refuges in the Thames Valley ?

The PCC reported that he put plans in place for longer term funding by offering three year contracts rather than one year and therefore was taking a risk in this regard as the Government had failed to give them a degree of stability with their current funding arrangements.

16. Nationally HMIC noted: "we found evidence to suggest that some forces have reduced the pace and ambition of their plans since last year." The Government expects Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and Chief Constables to do everything in their power to drive efficiencies at pace, and this settlement provides the opportunity to improve the quality of policing and continue to reduce crime.
  - a) Do you feel that the pace and ambition has reduced ? If not please give examples.
  - b) How ready do you feel in terms of meeting policing's own vision for 2025.

The PCC referred to the top slices/reallocations which were worth £812m in 2017/18, some 42% higher than in 2016/17. The majority of PCCs were not happy with the value of the Transformation Fund which had risen to £175m and was taking money away from their budgets to help with areas such as the potential transition of the new funding formula.

17. The recent HMIC Peel reports for the Thames Valley have commented specifically on the ICT Strategy and how it was fully aligned and supporting Force's objectives and confirmed that progress was good. Is the PCC happy with the current progress, particularly with the significant cost increases required during the last 12 months for the Contact Management Programme and the timely delivery of large capital schemes and challenges in recruitment in this area?

The PCC reported that the new Contact Management Programme had undergone a difficult start but that this technology was required to transform the police force and eventually produce savings. It was an important programme as their capabilities grow larger and linked in with Microsoft which was key.

Further to these questions the following points were noted:-

- Cllr McCracken referred to the new Policing and Crime Act and the budget implications of this, particularly relating to the cost of hiring consultants to help prepare a business case for the possible transfer of responsibility for the three fire and rescue services. The PCC reported that once an estimate had been made of how much it would cost, he would consider making a bid to the Police Transformation Fund but they would need to employ consultants to look at this in detail. There was a clear expectation that he would move ahead and produce a business case. They would be visiting the Sussex PCC who was one of the first to look at a business case for fire and they had a similar set up to the Thames Valley, having two fire and rescue services, one run by a County Council and the other by a Fire and Rescue Authority.
- Cllr Webb asked whether the Panel would have sight of the business case on emergency services collaboration. The PCC reported that the business case would be submitted to the Minister for consideration and there would be a public consultation. Cllr Webb asked about consultation with the Panel. The PCC reported that the Act only required the business case to be submitted to Government and to consult with the public and relevant local authorities. The Chairman commented that he would welcome the PCC keeping the Panel informed so that they could give their views on the subject and the PCC agreed that he would keep the Panel updated.
- Cllr Sinclair referred to the major fraud investigation and how the PCC will make representations to Government. The PCC reported that he would be putting more pressure on Government to finance fraud. The entire budget of the Serious Fraud Office is only £44m a year (40/50 staff), whilst for the City of London Police, who also investigate fraud (15 police officers), it is considerably less. When compared to a fraud of this size, then it is clear that far greater resources need to be made available to tackle the scale of the problem. The overall annual fraud and cyber-crime loss is put at nearly £200bn. Thames Valley were one of the very few Forces that could take on this case. The specialist capabilities of the police needed to be funded properly.
- Cllr Sinclair also referred to the funding for the voluntary sector and the need for certainty over funding to allow them to plan longer term. The PCC reported that the Ministry of Justice gave grant allocations for victim and witness services and as stated previously Thames Valley gave three year contracts with an option to extend for a further two years. They provided as much stability and security as they could and had taken on risk doing so.
- Cllr Sohal asked about the reduction in 59 officers and whether this was natural wastage. The PCC reported that there were no redundancies and that there had been a reduction of just 22 police staff.
- Cllr McCracken asked about protection of 'VIP' homes and the numbers involved. The PCC reported that there were a number of homes e.g at Windsor Castle but that the Force were well recompensed for this activity.
- The Chairman congratulated the Force and the PCC for the success in the recent fraud case which demonstrated how efficient the Force was in a major investigation.

On a vote being taken (two Members abstained), the Panel

## **RESOLVED**

- 1. That the Panel approve the Police and Crime Commissioner's precept for 2017/18 as set out in the OPCC report 'Revenue Estimates 2017/18 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2017/18 to 2020/21' having received satisfactory responses to the questions raised at Appendix B of the report.**
- 2. That the Panel add its support to the PCC's if any representations need to be made to the Home Secretary with regards to the setting of the revised Funding Formula.**

## **92. Annual Assurance Report**

Members received the Annual Assurance Report from the Chairman of the Joint Independent Audit Committee, Dr Louis Lee. The JIAC is a key component of the PCC and Chief Constable's arrangements for corporate governance and provides an independent and high level focus on the audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial management and reporting standards. This is the Committee's fourth Annual Report.

Dr Louis Lee presented the report which highlighted the following:-

- Based on the information they have seen collectively, or know about individually, they have assured the PCC and Chief Constable that the risk management and internal control environment in the Thames Valley is operating efficiently and effectively. Constructive challenges over the past twelve months on a wide range of topics have given the Committee access to information and meetings; the positive relationship with the PCC and the Chief Constable and senior staff has enabled the Committee to contribute to improved audit, risk management and internal controls.
- At their last annual report they had stated that they would retain a close interest in, and scrutiny of, the transformation of the ICT systems and infrastructure, which are recognised as being business critical, costly and in need of ongoing improvement. In June they received an update on ICT delivery. In March 2016 they received a confidential briefing on the critical issue of the sudden departure of the Interim Head of ICT and the subsequent review of the ICT Business Partner model for delivering the ICT Strategy. Whilst there were still a number of challenges to be overcome, the report highlighted the progress that had been made both in reducing the level of risk to the organisation and in restricting and reshaping of the structures and processes to deliver the new plan. They had also been invited to attend appropriate meetings of the ICT 2020 Vision Board and Force Transformation Board to see the corrective action being taken to overcome the problems identified earlier in the year and the progress being made to implement the five year ICT strategy.
- The external auditor issued a new significant value for money risk in relation to informed decision making, resulting from concerns around ICT procurement and the ICT Strategy.
- The External Auditor issued her Annual Audit Letter to the PCC and Chief Constable which was an unqualified audit opinion in respect of financial statements, an unqualified value for money conclusion and the audit completion certificate. TVP were one of the first local policing bodies national to have their accounts formally signed off by external audit and this was due to excellent project planning within and between the OPCC and Force Finance Departments and their effective working relationship with external audit staff.
- With regard to the Annual Governance Statement they had challenged officers as to why the various collaboration meetings were not being held in a timely manner given the importance of the subject area. A timetable for regular meetings have now been established and implemented but they would continue to monitor progress.
- The External Auditor also commented on the Chinese walls operating between the two audits of Thames Valley Police and Hampshire and reinforced the importance of effective governance of the extensive collaboration arrangements.



- The Single Equality Scheme has moved under objective 7 of the Force Delivery Plan and is subject to quality reporting to the PCC. The Equality and Diversity Annual Report will be presented to the Committee in June 2017.

During discussion Members made the following points:-

- Cllr Mallon referred to the Casey Review and asked what impact this had had on Equality and Diversity. Dr Lee responded that he hoped that the Chief Constable would change existing processes in view of this which should be included in the report that the Committee receive in June. The Chief Constable reported that a planning session was organised for next week to look at the issues raised in the Casey Review. The Delivery Plan was being finalised for next year which included this as an objective.
- Cllr Macpherson commented that the workload of the Audit Committee was large and asked how this was covered by the five Members and what support they received to undertake their roles. Dr Lee reported that they now have five Members but previously had three, so obviously all Members had to be present to be quorate. It was good to have five Members which meant that they could observe other Meetings, particularly with the issues that they had experienced with ICT. Audit Committee Members were now more integrated with the Force and acted as a critical friend. The PCC reported that it was difficult to find Members for the Audit Committee who had enough knowledge and experience.
- Cllr Webb referred to business continuity management and how this was governed. Dr Lee reported that this had changed in the last 12 months particularly with the departure of the Head of ICT. He referred to observing the ICT 2020 Vision Board which was attended by senior officers and that there had been a change in emphasis for ICT audits with a move away from auditing specific systems to a more inclusive review of project governance and programmes.
- Cllr McCracken asked about the Transformation Board. Dr Lee referred to the new ways of working with smart phones. The Transformation Board was chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable and all the Assistant Chief Constables also attended. Dr Lee commented that the Board was used to share good practice but was not used to challenge ways of working, which was probably undertaken at Chief Management Team level.
- Cllr McCracken then asked about the corporate risk register and particularly made reference to the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme. Dr Lee reported that the corporate risk register was looked at carefully and referred to the bi-annual risk business continuity meetings which would address any areas of concern.

Dr Lee was thanked for attending the Police and Crime Panel and for giving such an informative report.

### **93. Property Asset Management Plan Refresh**

The Panel received the report on the Property Asset Management Plan (AMP) which established the overall strategic direction for management of the Thames Valley Police (TVP) estate, and provides the context for making key decisions on the future of individual properties and investment priorities. The current AMP was approved in 2014 and is refreshed in detail every two years so the next Plan covers the period 2016-2020. This reflects the latest recommended position on individual site retention, confirms an ongoing disposal programmed and required activity over the next two years to continue to improve how the Force manage estate assets.

Members noted that the drivers and enablers behind the Plan were as follows:-

- Increased budgetary pressure on reducing non-staff costs and the cost of the estate overall to achieve the savings target included within the Productivity Strategy.
- ICT facilitated Smarter Ways of Working – to reduce the size of accommodation requirements and increase the potential to release/replace additional sites in the future at operational, support and Headquarters levels.

- Local Police Area Operating Model, Digital Policing and Contact Management Programme – to enable change and reduce the need for space.
- The report includes information on disposal and acquisitions, collaboration, protecting the custody suite estate, future housing and population growth, overall estate change and performance and reduction in the neighbourhood office estate.

During discussion the following points were noted:-

- Cllr Egleton asked about using surplus property for income streams rather than generating capital receipts. The PCC reported that they were buying assets rapidly rather than leasing and that 88% of the estate was now owned, compared with 72% in 2010 and 82% in 2014. They have surrendered more leases and purchased Meadow House, Kingfisher Court and Fountain Court which were expected to produce revenue savings. Police houses needed to be sold as they were unfit for modernisation and it was more efficient to get rid of them. He referred to police stations in major towns and commented that a decision needed to be taken about whether it was cost effective to relocate. There were some areas where they had surplus property which was not being sold to ensure that the best value was obtained from the market as a potential income stream.
- Cllr Macpherson referred to the One Public Estate initiative (where funding will support public sector partnerships to work collaboratively on land and property initiatives, generating new jobs and homes, creating more joined up public services to local communities, and delivering savings for the taxpayer) which is progressing substantively in Berkshire, initiated in Bucks but not yet commenced in Oxfordshire and MK. What future projects are in the pipeline ? The PCC commented that this was being led by Local Authorities not the police and it was work in progress. However there was the wider issue of working with partners to provide services to the community in a cost effective way. A proposal was put forward that this should be looked at further by the Panel to look at co-location on a wider public sector scale but on a vote (10 in favour and 5 against) it was agreed that this did not fall in the remit of the Panel; although Members supported more collaboration, it was a council led initiative. It was agreed that the Scrutiny Officer should circulate the terms of reference of the Panel to remind Members of its remit.

**Action: Scrutiny Officer**

- Cllr Sinclair referred to the proposal for St Aldates Police Station in Oxford and the need for a central police presence relevant to the size of Oxford. Members noted that during the Priority Based Budget review this was identified for potential disposal, utilising the existing estate for most of the occupants, but with a substantive city centre replacement facility. It was an expensive building to maintain and the viability of a replacement would be assessed over the next 18 months. The Fire Service was keen to engage around a possible joint/co-located facility. The PCC commented that it would need to be central to Oxford and that the station would not be moved unless there was a good alternative.
- Cllr Sinclair then referred to the CCTV suite. The Chief Constable reported that the CCTV review had looked at how technology had advanced in recent years, particularly in terms of monitoring and the cameras. The recommendations from the review had not progressed as fast as he wanted, although some areas were further ahead than others. The PCC had made some capital funding available to support local authorities to invest in new technology and this would be used to encourage consolidation and collaboration where possible.

The Panel noted the refresh of the Property Asset Management Plan.

#### **94. Report on the implications of the Policing and Crime Bill**

Members received a report on the implications for Thames Valley on the Policing and Crime Act. The Policing and Crime Act will support the transformation of policing and the fire service by:

- Enhancing local accountability of the fire and rescue service by enabling directly elected PCCs to take over the governance from Fire and Rescue Authorities where a local case is made.

- Driving efficiency and better value for money by facilitating closer collaboration between all three emergency services and maximising the ability of chief officers to make best use of the police officers, police staff and volunteers in their workforce.
- Strengthening public confidence and trust in the police by radically reforming and simplifying the police complaints and disciplinary systems, including by providing for an enhanced role for PCCs and the IPCC and greater protection for police whistle-blowers.
- Ensuring the police and other law enforcement agencies have the powers they need to prevent and detect crime and protect children and young people from sexual exploitation.
- Strengthening the protections for those under investigation by the police by ensuring that there is a proper balance between the rights of individuals and the need to protect the wider public.
- Ensuring that those experiencing a mental health crisis receive the help they need, and that police cells are only used as places of safety in exceptional circumstances.
- Reforming firearms and alcohol licensing laws to better protect the public by preventing criminals and terrorists from exploiting loopholes in the Firearms Acts and strengthening the ability of licensing authorities to take action against alcohol driven crime and disorder.

The PCC commented that in relation to complaints none of the concerns that PCCs had raised in relation to vexatious complaints had been addressed. He also commented that he was not minded to take advantage of the enabling legislation which would allow him to take on responsibility for the front-end of the police complaints system and responsibility for all duties regarding ongoing contact with the complainant. The responsibility for undertaking the role of the appellate body would not transfer to PCCs until around June 2018. This could have workload implications for the Panel.

Cllr Birchley referred to the new reform which provided for a presumption in favour of releasing a suspect without bail, with bail only being imposed when it is both necessary and proportionate which would represent a big cultural shift for the police service. The PCC commented that this new provision related back to the issues with Operation Midland and the fact that some people were on bail indefinitely. However there was now a new offence of breach of pre-charge bail which related to travel for individuals arrested on suspicion of terrorism offences. The Chief Constable reported that there were now statutory time limits with regard to bail not lasting longer than 28 days which is extendable in complex cases. Computer systems would need to be updated to manage the change which will not come into force until the end of 2017 but this is affecting all Forces. A small number of additional staff would be needed to manage bail issues. There would be a degree of risk of releasing people on bail which will have to be managed carefully.

## 95. Topical Issues

### Office of the PCC

Cllr Sohal asked whether any progress had been made in relation to Associate PCCs. The PCC reported that they were looking at the model used by the West Mercia PCC who had appointed community ambassadors on service contracts. The Panel welcomed this initiative.

### 101 site visit

A site visit to the control centre at Kidlington would be arranged for a small group of Members (6-8) and dates would be circulated.

Action: Scrutiny Officer

### Local Policing

A video was shown on local policing.

<https://youtu.be/Ek9Mt-pliwA>

“The concept behind the new operating model is to deliver more efficient and smarter ways of working whilst ensuring that resourcing matches demand and that the right person is deployed to the right job at the right

time. Pilot schemes were launched on three of the Force's Local Policing Areas – Reading, West Berkshire and Milton Keynes, focusing upon different aspects of the proposed operating model and the results have been very encouraging. Through smarter and more consistent processes, which we are calling 'Smarter Resolution' time spent investigating specific crime types through to resolution has reduced significantly by around 30%. This in turn has enabled faster response times in relation to Immediate and Urgent Graded Incidents. "

Cllr Birchley referred to a recent press article in the Bucks Advertiser on the number of police officers in the Thames Valley falling by 3.3% between September 2015 and September 2016 which was the biggest drop in seven years. The Chief Constable reported that it was important to look at figures over the longer term rather than one year in isolation. There has been a reduction in 59 officers as a result of workforce modernisation but this had not impacted on service delivery and the Force were targeting resources to where they were most needed.

Cllr Birchley asked how the changes to local policing had been communicated to the public and whether it would be presented in Buckinghamshire at the Local Area Forums. The Chief Constable reported that the public would not notice much change and it was only an internal restructure to target resources more effectively. The PCSO's would remain the single point of contact which would avoid double or triple tasking. There will be a response team that deals with incidents which will then be looked at by the Investigation and Problem Solving Team.

Cllr Sinclair also suggested giving a presentation at the Neighbourhood Action Groups as they were concerned about the changes to local policing. He commented that it was important particularly for the problem solving teams to work in partnership with local communities so that problems are solved together not in isolation.

Cllr Egleton commented that there should be more communication about the changes to local policing and said that there was an item on this issue at his local Community Safety Partnership meeting. Whilst Members had received a letter from the Local Area Commander there should be further communication with parishes and the public as there were concerns about the new model and that there would be less visible policing. It was important for the police to explain how the new model was operating and the benefits it would bring to local communities with little impact on visibility. The Chief Constable reported that the new model was key to address crimes which were more complex in nature and required a different response such as cyber-crime which needed visible policing on the internet and serious organised crime.

Cllr Burke referred to past public surveys and the fear of crime and local communities needed visibility to feel safe. The Chief Constable reported that it was important to allocate resources to areas of most need. They had changed local policing so that police officers no longer used local police stations as a base and were visible in local communities using new technology to work more smartly. In terms of preventing crime an assessment was made at every incident to understand how this type of crime could have been further prevented. He emphasised the importance of the public taking more responsibility for their own safety.

Cllr Webb asked about how this would be structured within Local Police Areas. Each Local Police Area would have their own hubs to cover response and investigation but there would still be borderless policing.

Cllr Mallon asked about progress on reintroducing police helmets. The PCC reported that he was talking to people about this and most of them were very supportive of this.

Cllr Burke talked about the increase in burglary for Asian gold. The Chief Constable made reference to a spate of cases previously in North Oxford which had been dealt with effectively. This was a national issue due to the price of gold increasing. The PCC referred to the need for prevention and that some Asian weddings were widely advertised. Members noted that serious organised crime groups received inside information and sometimes Asian houses had markings on the front of their house which made them easy to identify.

CCTV

CLr Sinclair asked about the CCTV review and guidance for next steps. The Chief Constable reported that a report had been produced by external consultants and Oxford City should have a copy of that report. The PCC reported that this was a difficult area to address as the funding for CCTV differed across the Thames Valley. He would speak specifically with the Member after the meeting in relation to Oxford City and how this could be taken forward.

#### Elder Abuse

CLr Burke expressed concern about the high figures for elder abuse in Milton Keynes. The Chief Constable commented that it was important to be careful in interpreting the figures as this included elderly victims who had been affected by all sorts of different crimes. There was also a massive under reporting of elder abuse and an increase could be related to awareness campaigns in terms of reporting abuse.

### **96. Work Programme**

Some Members had suggested that an item be put on the next agenda on roads policing and the joint operation with Hampshire. The PCC commented that road deaths had gone up recently which could be related to the number of new electronic driver information/entertainment systems now routinely incorporated in cars which were a distraction to the driver. The Chief Constable asked for further information on which areas the Panel were interested so he could provide the relevant background. This item was agreed.

The next meeting includes an update from the PCC on the Local Criminal Justice System. Members noted that the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel were undertaking an inquiry into how the PCC and other criminal justice agencies are co-operating to ensure that there is an efficient and effective criminal justice system with a particular focus on youth re-offending. Members welcomed a briefing from the PCC on the wider criminal justice system and his role as part of that. Following this discussion Members could then decide whether to look at a specific area, which could be a priority in his new Police and Crime Plan. Under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 there is a reciprocal duty for the PCC and certain criminal justice bodies to co-operate in ensuring an efficient and effective criminal justice system and the Panel could look at how the PCC discharges his responsibility. Members agreed this way forward.

### **97. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

7 April 2017 at 11am at Aylesbury Vale District Council.

**CHAIRMAN**