Thames Valley
Police & Crime Panel

Minutes

Minutes of the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel held on Friday, 21 June 2019, in Olympic Room, Aylesbury Vale District Council, commencing at 11.00 am and concluding at 1.05 pm.

Members Present
Councillor Bill Bendyshe-Brown (Buckinghamshire County Council), Councillor Robin Bradburn (Milton Keynes Council), Councillor David Cannon (Windsor and Maidenhead Borough Council), Councillor Nigel Chapman (Oxford City Council), Councillor Trevor Egleton (South Bucks District Council), Councillor John Harrison (Bracknell Forest Council), Councillor Kieron Mallon (Oxfordshire County Council), Councillor Andrew McHugh (Cherwell District Council), Councillor Mohammed Nazir (Slough Borough Council), Councillor Barrie Patman (Wokingham Borough Council), Councillor David Rouane (South Oxfordshire District Council), Councillor Jonathan Waters (Chiltern District Council), Councillor Mark Winn (Aylesbury Vale District Council) and Councillor Howard Woollaston (West Berkshire Council).

Officers Present
Khalid Ahmed (Scrutiny Officer).

Others Present
Matthew Barber (Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner), Paul Hammond (Chief Executive, Office of PCC), Jason Hogg (Deputy Chief Constable, Thames Valley Police) and Anthony Stansfeld (Police and Crime Commissioner).

Apologies

Councillor David Carroll (Wycombe District Council), Councillor Neil Fawcett (Vale of White Horse District Council), Councillor Steve Good (West Oxfordshire District Council), Councillor Sophia James (Reading Borough Council), Mr Curtis-James Marshall (Independent Member) and Mr Phillip Morrice (Independent Member).

At the start of the meeting, Councillor Egleton reported that he would not be seeking re-election as Chairman of Panel. The Panel thanked Councillor Egleton for his service as Chairman from the inception of the Panel in 2012.

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

That Councillor Mallon be elected as Chairman to the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel for the ensuing Year.

Councillor Mallon took the Chair

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

That Councillor Egleton be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel for the ensuing year.

3 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel held on 12 April 2019 be agreed as a correct record, subject to a correction to Minute No.45 – Themed Item – Update on Local Policing Model – under question 8, should read "….an extra £100m would fund around 2,000 extra Police Officers".

[It was reported that in relation to Minute No.50 - Chairman Update/PCC Update/Topical Issues – Relocation of the Sexual Assault Referral Centre from Bletchley Police Station to Bicester, the PCC had written to the Sexual Assault Referral Centre Board to pass on the concerns regarding the relocation of the centre and the impact this would have on victims.]

4 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions submitted.

5 UPDATE ON LOCAL POLICING MODEL

Deputy Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police, Jason Hogg attended the meeting and introduced the report. The report provided the Panel with an update on the current Local Policing model within Thames Valley Police and provided the background to the history of the model.

Reference was made to the original objective of the new Local Policing Model which was to undertake a review of the structure and activity of Local Police Area level policing in view of the changing demands on the service, with reduced resource. It was reported that a new operating model was developed to meet those changing demands, with the cornerstone of the model being increased neighbourhood policing allied to problem solving.

The Panel was informed that the model was implemented on 1 June, 2017 with the objective to manage demand more effectively, and to provide a 'one touch' response to the public, reducing the number of officers that victims had contact with.

The Panel was informed that the 24 hour Response Teams were reduced in size to provide a more specialist resource that could attend immediate and urgent incidents. The Response teams would not carry an investigative workload which would allow them to concentrate on responding.

Reference was made to the managing of investigations where for example, crimes at petrol stations were reported on the telephone, rather than by the physical presence of the Police.

An Investigation Hub was developed that consisted of detectives, uniformed officers and police staff case investigators. These teams were to be responsible for all local crime, and other responsibilities such as missing persons, fear for welfare enquiries and scene/cell watches. The Investigation Hub, as the largest team, would also support the Response teams by providing additional resources during periods of 'surge' demand.

The Neighbourhood teams were restructured to incorporate geographical teams to provide visibility and engagement, while the Problem Solving teams focused on the longer term issues and early intervention. To support the management of demand, each LPA was required to provide a Smarter Resolution function where low risk demand could be resolved or filtered out from the front line, essentially providing a triage function on the LPAs. Some LPAs maintained or developed proactive teams to target local priorities.

The more sophisticated assessment of demand, allowed for the resourcing levels of each LPAs to be reviewed. This resulted in a redistribution of resources across the LPAs, which reflected demand more accurately. In addition, the shift patterns also reflected calls for service, and increased the number of officers available during the day and evening, while reducing the night turn.

Reference was made to the implementation of the new model coinciding with increased demands on the Police, with increased calls caused mainly as a result of increased crime and recent terrorist attacks. The impact was felt on Police Officers who at the same time saw their numbers reduced by around 150.

The Panel was informed that the changes in shift patterns had affected staff welfare; with officers reporting being continually tired and unable to recuperate effectively.

The Deputy Chief Constable reported that as a result, a number of further changes were recommended to be made which included a change to the shift pattern, a review of command areas, a review of the Smarter Resolution function and the workforce mix between police and police staff. It was recognised that there was a necessity to recruit more officers to meet demand and the requirements of the new Local Model.

The solutions which were agreed by the Force resulted in the following actions:

1. Merging the Response team and Investigation Hub to promote a one team ethos. It was also felt that this integration would share the burden of investigative work more equitably between resources and achieve better supervision. This team is now called the Incident and Crime Response (ICR) team.
2. In order to provide adequate and consistent leadership to staff as well as LPA performance accountability, each LPA now has a dedicated Inspector for each of the five ICR teams. In addition each LPA has a Detective Inspector and a minimum of two Neighbourhood Inspectors.
3. Review of minimum / safe staffing - To ensure safety and force resilience remained a priority at the front end of 24 hour operational response.
4. Each LPA would maintain a Smarter Resolution Team and this team to have a dedicated supervisor.
5. Each LPA to develop a proactive capability to have a Team 6 if desired. This team's focus would be on the threats posed by County Drugs lines.
6. Maintain and develop the Area CID function.

In order to support the LPAs in securing these changes, there was an increase of 18 Police Officers to support the front line, and an extension of temporary police staff investigators. The increase in Police precept has been essential in achieving this. The Force anticipates that it will be up to full establishment for Police officers by September 2019.

Panel Members asked the following questions:

1. Reference was made to lack of evidence of increased visible policing on the streets, with an example of Princes Risborough given and that the move to problem solving policing was taking police officers off of the streets. Could the PCC provide an assurance that the Chief Constable's new local policing model would continue to be monitored to ensure local policing for residents was improved and that a further report be provided to the Panel on the operation of the new model, once staffing is up to full establishment and fully trained?

[The PCC reported that an update report would be submitted to the Autumn meeting of the Panel,

providing details of where the improvements to improved local policing had been made.]

2. Could the PCC explain whether this new local policing model would have any effect on the role of Local Authority CSP's?

[The PCC informed the Panel that he would be meeting shortly with all Community Safety Partnerships when he would raise the issues around the local policing model and discuss the impact on CSPs.]

3. Reference was made to the Smarter Resolution Teams and the PCC was asked whether these officers would respond to commercial burglaries.

[The PCC acknowledged that the Police response to commercial burglaries was a problem at a national level and this needed to improve.]

4. The Milton Keynes Council representative reported that his Council, as part of its Council Plan, had agreed an allocation of £500k to work with the Police to recruit and retain Police Community Support Officers for the Milton Keynes area.

[The PCC welcomed the announcement from Milton Keynes Council and reported that the contribution for extra Police Community Support Officers would make a difference. Reference was made to Police Community Support Officers leaving to become full time Police Officers which created a problem. Further work was needed on the retention of Police Community Support Officers as they were an important visible resource.]

5. A Member referred to good neighbourhood Police Officers and PCSOs who had left the local area and their replacements had to learn about the neighbourhood area. This also affected communities as their new local Police Officers and PCSOs were often not provided with a good "handover" which created problems. This transition needed to improve.

[The PCC reported that local knowledge was a cornerstone of neighbourhood policing and "handovers" needed to be better to enable a better service to be provided to the public. The high turnover of PCSOs was not helping the situation.]

6. A Member expressed concern that what was introduced last year had not worked and the PCC was asked if he was confident that eventually this new Local Policing Model would work and would officers be given training. In addition, reference was made to the increased Police Precept and the PCC was asked for details on how much the implementation of the new Local Policing Model would cost.

[*The PCC reported that the Police establishment was around 70/80 short but should be up to full establishment by September. New entrants would take at least two years to train. The Panel was informed that the funding for the new Local Policing Model comprised of around one-third of Police Precept funding. Reference was made to the need for more Government funding for Policing and the PCC expressed his unhappiness at having to ask for an increase in the Police Precept, even though it was supported by the public in the consultation which took place.*

The PCC commented that the Local Police Model had not failed, and referred to the new model being introduced at the time of an exceptional demand on the Thames Valley Police. He referred to President Trump's visit and the Royal Weddings; all which diverted police resources and impacted on policing around the Thames Valley.

The PCC agreed to provide a further update on the Local Policing Model and on funding to the autumn

meeting of the Panel.]

RESOLVED – That the update provided be noted and the PCC be asked to provide a further update on the implementation of the Local Policing Model, together with details on costs.

6 GOVERNANCE OF THAMES VALLEY POLICE COLLABORATIONS

The Panel was reminded that Police and Crime Panels had a duty to scrutinise the role of their respective Commissioner in the collaborative work being undertaken by their respective Chief Constables including, for example, policing functions delivered under the South East Regional Integration Partnership (SERIP) collaborative arrangements.

This legitimate right extended to only scrutinising the governance arrangements the Police and Crime Commissioner had adopted to enable him to review performance of a function or service carried out under a collaborative initiative and to hold Thames Valley Police Chief Constable to account for the performance of that function or service.

The Panel was provided with a summary of the functional activities and governance arrangements of the major collaborative ventures involving Thames Valley Police. These included the following:

- Hants/TVP Bi-lateral Collaboration

The TVP & Hampshire Bi-lateral Collaboration Governance Board oversees and scrutinises the work of the existing collaborative functions (i.e. Operations, ICT and Information Management) as well as development of the Contact Management and Digital Policing programmes.

- South East Region Collaboration

Governance of collaboration between forces (Thames Valley, Sussex, Surrey and Hampshire) across the South East region is undertaken at the Regional Governance Board.

The South East Regional Organised Crime Unit (SEROCU), hosted by Thames Valley Police, brings together the current regional organised crime units under one structure.

- Chiltern Transport Consortium

The Chiltern Transport Consortium (CTC) is collaboration between Hertfordshire Constabulary, Bedfordshire Police, Civil Nuclear Constabulary, British Transport Police and Thames Valley Police. It was originally set up in 2014 to operate as a transport shared service for the procurement and maintenance of the forces' transport fleet under lead force TVP.

The Deputy PCC reported that this collaboration brought great savings in terms of procuring vehicles and reference was made to the potential move to electric/hybrid vehicles. The logistics and testing of this still required work because of the large area which Thames Valley covered.

- National Police Air Service

The National Police Air Service (NPAS) is a collaborative venture involving all police forces across England and Wales. Reference was made to the need for a new fleet of helicopters.

- TVP / TV Fire and Rescue Services

The PCC and the Force have previously agreed a memorandum of understanding with the three Fire and Rescue Services in the Thames Valley regarding exploring possible collaborative opportunities in the sharing of premises.

The Deputy PCC referred to the proposed tri-station in Crowthorne, Berkshire which was a joint venture which would result in Police, Fire and Ambulance Services all using the same station facility.

- Equip (formerly ERP Project)

Partner Forces with the Thames Valley are Sussex and Surrey.

- Single Online Home

This was governed under a S22a Agreement. Governance was carried out through an operational National Steering Group, and overseen by the Digital Public Contact (DPC) Programme Board comprising representation from forces, PCCs and partners.

Metropolitan Police Service was the Host Authority.

- National Counter Terrorism Police Services

Governed under a S22A Agreement – Counter Terrorism Coordination Committee

- National Ballistics Intelligence Service (NABIS)

Governed under a S22A Agreement – hosted by West Midlands Police.

Panel Members asked the following questions:

1. Could the PCC provide an estimate of the yearly savings brought about by TVP collaborations?

[The PCC reported that he estimated the savings made were around £100,000 year which were ploughed back into front line policing.]

2. The PCC was asked whether there were any effective collaborations in relation to Serious Organised Crime?

[The Deputy PCC reported that there were collaborations with other Police Forces in the fight against Serious Organised Crime and cited the work which is carried out in relation to exploitation, Modern Slavery and County Lines which all involved sharing intelligence between Forces to stop these crimes.]

3. Were there any future plans to introduce more combined services such as the recently announced joint Police/Ambulance Service/Fire Service station in Crowthorne, Berkshire?

[The Deputy PCC reported that this should be about all public services and should not be limited to Police/Ambulance Service/Fire Service. The Thames Valley was a huge region which made it difficult to locate Police stations in remote areas. Opportunities were being looked at for similar collaborations with other public sector partners throughout the Thames Valley.]

RESOLVED – That the Police and Crime Commissioner be asked to consider providing a regular

forward plan of key decisions and supporting information through publishing a non-confidential summary of Regional Governance Board Minutes, to enable Members to be kept informed of TVP collaborations.

7 PCC ANNUAL REPORT

Under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Police and Crime Commissioner was required to produce and publish an Annual Report which summarised the exercise of the PCC's functions in each financial year and the progress which had been made in the financial year in meeting the objectives contained in the PCC's Police and Crime Plan.

The PCC introduced the report and informed the Panel that the report covered the activities undertaken and progress made by the PCC during the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019, in meeting the objectives contained in his Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021.

The PCC reported that equal weight was given to all five strategic priorities; however, the key threads of Vulnerability, Prevention and Re-Offending were particularly highlighted in the report.

Reference was made to 2018/19 being a notable year for Thames Valley Police (TVP) as it represented the very best of British policing in the eyes of the world. Thames Valley Police ran the largest operations in its history: the Royal Wedding in Windsor in May 2018 and the visit by the US President to four locations within Thames Valley in July 2018.

Throughout these operations the officers and staff of Thames Valley Police showcased the excellence of the force and for British policing generally.

The Panel was informed that in July 2018, Thames Valley Police and Hampshire Constabulary launched a new website, which now shared the same platform as the Metropolitan Police. This would eventually be a 'single online home' for all police forces.

The PCC expressed his pleasure that the Government had recognised the need for additional resources for the Police to help tackle serious violence and knife crime. Whilst the Thames Valley had not seen the large increase in knife crime as had some parts of the country, the Thames Valley was seeing an increase in violent crime which was a concern. Reference was made to TVP working proactively and in partnership to tackle the problem and this additional funding would provide a significant boost.

In 2018-19, Thames Valley saw offences involving more serious violence significantly decrease, with 35% fewer GBH (section 18) offences than the same time last year. The Force also saw positive reductions in theft from person (down 23%) and house burglaries (down 2%). Particularly pleasing was that domestic burglary had reduced by 21% over the past 7 years, with rural crime being given much greater priority over the same period. Overall crime levels in the Thames Valley were lower compared to ten and fifteen years ago, which as one of the less well funded police forces, was a testament to the good work of the Force.

The PCC's office had effectively managed its Ministry of Justice grant funding to provide a range of victim and witness support services, and had introduced the 'Victims First' service, which offered support through a single point of contact for victims and witnesses of crime, including affected family members. Since its launch, Victims First had dealt with 5,194 referrals with 2,000 having gone on to receive specialist support from other services which the PCC fund.

Other highlights included providing community safety grants totalling £2.7m to County and Unitary

Councils in the Thames Valley area to help them to support the PCC in delivering Police and Crime Plan strategic priorities.

Panel Members raised the following points:

1. In relation to vulnerability, the PCC was asked for an update on the appointment of the Single Point of Contact for Taxi-Licensing which he had agreed to fund.

[The PCC reported that the Force had experienced problems recruiting to this post, but an update would be provided to Panel Members.]

2. In relation to Prevention, the PCC was asked to provide an update on the performance of dealing with '101' calls.

[The Deputy Chief Constable provided background to the issue. 999 calls had increased by 9%, with a resultant increase in 101 calls. Last year, 101 calls took an average of 6 minutes to answer. For this month this was now down to 2.4 minutes which was a big improvement. The Contact Management platform and more call handlers would improve the performance further.]

3. In relation to Prevention and Early Intervention, the PCC was asked, how successful has TVP's use of "stop and search" powers been in the fight against knife crime?

[The PCC reported that "stop and search" was an effective tool in the fight against knife crime. "Stop and search" naturally, resulted in higher rates of detection of both knife and drug crimes. The PCC commented that knife and drug crimes were often connected.]

4. Reference was made to the use of social media, particularly Twitter, by TVP, in highlighting uninsured motorists and whether this practise was having an effect in terms of awareness.

[The Deputy PCC praised the work of the Roads Policing Team in providing the public with up-to-date information relating to road closures and motorists caught for offences etc.; all of which engaged with the public and increased awareness.]

5. In relation to the reporting of Hate Crimes, the PCC was asked what priority these crimes were given.

[The PCC responded that the reporting of Hate Crimes was given the highest priority. Hate Crimes were often down to perception, but all reported were fully scrutinised and investigated. Reference was made to the 2017 Inspectorate report which found that Thames Valley Police were inadvertently not recording all crimes correctly. This had now been rectified and all Hate Crimes, regardless of types were recorded.]

6. In relation to the Police response to fraud, the PCC was asked about the Police response to fraud committed against local charities as this was on the increase and whether low level fraud such as this was given sufficient priority.

[The PCC reported that it was estimated that there was £38 billion of fraud a year nationally. There were not enough resources put into fighting fraud at a national level and as a result only a relatively small number of fraud cases were investigated due to lack of Police resources.]

RESOLVED - That a letter be sent to the OPCC in accordance with Section 28(4) of the Police Reform

and Social Responsibility Act 2011 to review, report and make recommendations, if appropriate, regarding the PCC's Annual Report 2018/19.

8 UPDATE ON COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIPS

The report submitted to the Panel provided Members with feedback from Local Community Safety Partnerships across the Thames Valley.

The Chairman asked that Members note the work which had been carried out by their CSPs and that Members should make themselves aware of the work which was carried out to enable them to feedback information to the Panel. For next year, Members were asked to ensure that they worked with their CSP Managers when summarising their local CSP activities.

The Panel noted the report and welcomed all the work which was being carried out across the Thames Valley.

9 PCP ANNUAL REPORT

The Panel noted the Police and Crime Panel Annual Report which summarised the activities of the Panel during 2018/19.

The Vice-Chairman informed the Panel that this was the sixth annual report of the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel and for 2018/19 the Panel continued to both challenge and support the Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley. The hard work and dedication of Panel Members was praised.

RESOLVED - That the Annual Report be adopted and published and that Panel Members submit the Annual Report to their respective Authorities for information.

10 REPORT OF THE PREVENTING CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION SUB-COMMITTEE

The Panel was provided with a report of the Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation Sub-Committee of 12 April 2019, which contained a recommendation to disband the Sub-Committee, to enable the wider issues of exploitation to be explored at the full Panel meeting.

The Chairman informed the Panel that the issue of exploitation had widened beyond child sexual exploitation and the Panel should be the forum to explore and scrutinise what the PCC was doing, in the form of a themed item on an annual basis.

RESOLVED – That the report from the Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation Sub-Committee be noted and approval be given to the disbanding of the Sub-Committee, and the Panel's Rules of Procedure be amended accordingly.

11 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE PANEL'S RULES OF PROCEDURE, PANEL MEMBERSHIP, APPOINTMENT TO SUB-COMMITTEES/TASK GROUPS AND BUDGET

The Panel received the report of the Scrutiny Officer on the Panel rules of procedure, Panel membership and budget. No amendments had been submitted to the rules of procedure.

Discussion took place on the future location and possible broadcasting of meetings of the Panel. The Panel was reminded that the present meeting location at Aylesbury Vale District Council had been

considered the most accessible for all Members from across Thames Valley. However, the cost of webcasting meetings from “the Oculus” room at Aylesbury was prohibitive.

Reference was made to previous investigations which had found that there were other venues in the Thames Valley where webcasting could take place such as Reading Borough Council, Wokingham Borough Council and Cherwell District Council etc.; however these locations were not as accessible for all Members from across the Thames Valley.

After discussions it was agreed that meetings of the Panel continue to take place at Aylesbury Vale and that discussion take place with Aylesbury Vale District Council on the cost of using the Oculus meeting room at Aylesbury Vale which had the webcasting capability.

In terms of Membership of the Panel’s established Committees, the following memberships were agreed:-

Police and Crime Panel – It was agreed that named substitutes be appointed by each local authority.

Complaints Sub-Committee – Cllr Bill Bendyshe-Brown, Cllr David Carroll, Curtis James Marshall and Cllr Kieron Mallon. (3 vacancies)

Budget Task and Finish Group – Cllr Robin Bradburn, Cllr Trevor Egleton, Cllr Andrew McHugh and Cllr Barrie Patman. (1 vacancy)

RESOLVED - 1. That the Panel budget as outlined in the report be approved and the membership of the Panel’s Sub-Committees be agreed as detailed above.

2. That the Panel’s Rule of Procedure be updated to reflect the disbanding of the Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation Sub-Committee and the appointment of named substitutes.

3. That future meetings of the Panel be held at Aylesbury Vale District Council Offices and officers be asked to carry out the actions outlined above, in relation to webcasting of meetings.

12 CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE/ PCC UPDATE /TOPICAL ISSUES

The Panel noted a report on Topical Issues.

13 WORK PROGRAMME

The Work Programme for the Panel was noted and Members were asked to give consideration to future topics and inform the Scrutiny Officer accordingly.

14 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The Panel noted that the next meeting would take place on 6 September 2019 at 11.00am at Aylesbury Vale District Council Offices.

CHAIRMAN