

MINUTES of the meeting of the **SURREY POLICE & CRIME PANEL** held at 10.30 am on 12 March 2013 at Ashcombe Suite, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 2DN.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting.

Members:

Mrs Dorothy Ross-Tomlin (Chairman)
Mrs Pat Frost
Borough Councillor Terry Dicks (Vice-Chairman)
Borough Councillor John O'Reilly
Borough Councillor Clive Smitheram
Borough Councillor Richard Billington
District Councillor Margaret Cooksey
Borough Councillor Victor Broad
District Councillor Ken Harwood
Independent Member Anne Hoblyn

Apologies:

Borough Councillor Penny Forbes-Forsyth
Borough Councillor Charlotte Morley
Borough Councillor Bryan Cross

6/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

Apologies were received from Councillor Penny Forbes-Forsyth, Councillor Bryan Cross and Councillor Charlotte Morley. Independent Member Janice Turner chose to resign from the Police and Crime Panel prior to the meeting.

7/13 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING [Item 2]

The minutes of the meeting that took place on 6 February 2013 were agreed as a correct record.

8/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

None.

9/13 PUBLIC QUESTIONS [Item 4]

None.

10/13 SURREY POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S DRAFT POLICE AND CRIME PLAN [Item 5]

The Chairman of the Surrey Police and Crime Panel explained that as part of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Police and Crime Commissioner was required to share their proposed Police and Crime Plan with the Panel prior to its implementation. Under the regulations the Panel did not have the power of veto, however it could make recommendations which the Commissioner would be required to provide a response to.

The Chairman stated that the purpose of the item was for Members of the Panel to question the Commissioner on his proposals for policing in Surrey and to discuss any areas of concern.

The Panel began by discussing recent comments made by the Police and Crime Commissioner in the media, with particular regard given to statements made during an interview with the Epsom Guardian. Some Members raised concerns over the nature of some of the statements made during the interview, particularly comments about Hillsborough and ethnic diversity within the Police Service.

The Commissioner explained that the article published by the Epsom Guardian did not accurately reflect the 90 minute interview, and that the comments expressed were taken out of context. He made the following key statements:

- The Commissioner was attempting to discuss how fundamentally important it was that the Police Service was full of high quality Police Officers. He discussed how the age, sex, gender or ethnicity of a Police Officer was not important to a victim of crime so long as they were compassionate and good at their job.
- He stated it was important that the Police Service reflected the diversity of society, however there was currently an issue that all ethnic minorities were put in a single group. This approach by the Police, the Commissioner argued, did not look at the different ethnic

groups and the approaches that would be appropriate to engage and recruit them to the Police.

- The Commissioner conceded that the Epsom Guardian interview had been a lesson for him and that in future he would be more careful about the way he expressed his views. He explained that on the whole his experience with the media had been positive with several national newspaper articles and a radio interview.
- Members of the Panel queried why the Commissioner had chosen to comment on the MacPherson report and Hillsborough disaster during the newspaper interview. The Commissioner stated that he had discussed the MacPherson report to raise concerns regarding the recruitment of quality Police officers. He apologised to the families of the Hillsborough victims if any offence had been caused due to his comments. He stated that he was attempting to raise concerns regarding current plans to raise recruits to the position of Superintendent after 15 months of service; suggesting that an under qualified Police Officer was the cause of the Hillsborough disaster and these proposals could lead to a similar disaster.

The Chairman thanked the Commissioner for his explanation of the comments made during the Epsom Guardian interview and invited the Commissioner to present the draft Police and Crime Plan.

The Commissioner provided the Panel with an overview of his draft Police and Crime Plan, as detailed in the agenda papers, and made the following key points:

- The Police and Crime Plan looked at ways to deliver the People's Priorities. The Plan had been taken to a variety of neighbourhood and ward meetings, four large public meetings and had been tested with different hard to hear groups and businesses to establish whether the Plan focussed on the right areas and had the right approach.
- He had held three webcast meetings with the Chief Constable; who had begun to test the Plan and create reports. This would enable the Commissioner to hold her, and her team, to account by measuring how Surrey Police were performing. These performance reports would then be given to the Panel to enable the Panel to hold the Commissioner to account.

The Chairman thanked the Commissioner for his overview and invited questions from Panel Members. During the following question and answer session, the following points were clarified:

- The Commissioner had taken the feedback from the Panel from the last meeting, along with the latest statement from the Police and Criminal Justice Minister and criminologists, and had decided to remove the targets which had been in the precept report. The Commissioner argued that over time setting targets was not the best or appropriate way to improve policing in Surrey. He was very keen not to have Surrey Police chasing targets over improving policing.
- To monitor Surrey Police progress the Commissioner would request the Chief Constable to provide him with the figures for arrests, seizing

of assets and crime. This would enable him to see how Surrey Police was performing in comparison to previous years. These figures would be shared with the Panel and would allow for a more flexible approach to policing.

- Officers who tackled organised crime were not seen as back office staff and so were not at risk of savings cuts. Police forces in the South East were forming a South East Regional Crime Unit which would enable a more cohesive approach to tackling organised crime. The Commissioner would ensure Surrey got its fair share of the assets and resources due to fraud being a concern in the county.
- The Commissioner was unable to visit the whole of Surrey when testing his Police and Crime Plan, however in future he intended to visit all of Surrey to discuss his plans with the public and requested Members oversee surveys.
- The Panel discussed the issue that Police satisfaction surveys had often been inaccurate as there have been many who are unhappy with the Police. It was suggested that in future surveys need to be written in a format which would give honest answers regarding satisfaction.
- The Commissioner stated a shift in the leadership approach would take place, with senior staff being required to look at the quality of service they were providing. This would require senior Police to view their roles differently and put an emphasis on the skills of Officers. The feedback from the Panel and other Councillors would help with understanding and assessing qualitative results.
- Money from seized assets went to three organisations; 50% to the Treasury with the rest split between the Crown Prosecution Service and Surrey Police. The Commissioner stated he would like the share going to Surrey Police to be increased.
- Surrey Police has been in discussion with British banks to utilise their IT expertise to catch those who commit large acts of fraud.
- The Commissioner anticipated the Local Policing Boards would assist local policing by enabling the public to speak to Police leaders in their area. Regular meetings with the Borough Inspector, Councillors and Officers in charge of Police and Street Crime would enable a local strategic plan to be formed. He discussed that these plans would be sent to him to enable him to give a Surrey-wide strategic view to Surrey Leaders and the Panel. The Local Policing Board was a new and separate group, but its success would be dependent on the interest of local Councillors and Borough Inspectors.
- The Commissioner acknowledged the work carried out by PCSOs, but stated the funding for these individuals was decreasing and Surrey Police was unable to recruit anymore. Whilst there was no intention to make existing PCSOs redundant, the Commissioner would be encouraging these individuals to consider becoming a Police Constable.

- The decision had been made that all savings made by the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office would be put back into policing with £80,000 of savings having been made. Organisations across Surrey had been invited to bid for up to £5,000 grants; but due to the short time limit the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner only requested 12 lines in the application. 52 applications had been received, with 24 successful applicants focussing on projects across Surrey.
- The Commissioner has been approached by a number of groups regarding Community Safety Funds. However, he discussed that not all Community Safety Partnerships had been effective and that he would be looking at how they have made a positive difference, in addition to future funding opportunities.
- The Commissioner has had regular meetings with other Police and Crime Commissioners and Magistrates to discuss ways to tackle concerns regarding sentences.
- Neighbourhood Watch schemes were discussed as having a positive role within the community and should be utilised in future.
- Though the Plan was an overarching strategic document it was felt that there was not enough discussion on youth crime and preventing young people entering the criminal justice system. The Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner confirmed that this was an important area of focus for them, with 20 of the grants approved focussing on youth projects. The Deputy Commissioner had been looking into youth crime and approaching youth groups across the County.
- It was discussed that while it was important for the Commissioner to be open and transparent, Panel Members were concerned that webcasting all meeting with the Chief Constable may possibly mean he was unable to hold her to account due to the nature of some topics. The Commissioner assured the Panel that he was in regular conversation with the Chief Constable and had been able to discuss exempt information outside webcasted meetings.
- The Commissioner expressed the need for Police Officers to be more emotionally intelligent and reflect more on the service they provided victims. He argued that the use of jargon by the Police made it difficult for victims to understand the Police process and how they could contact Officers regarding their case. He agreed that while feedback from the public was often positive, there had been cases when it had been negative and this needed to be looked at.
- The mystery shopper aspect of the Plan was still to be developed, however the Commissioner mentioned he was looking to recruit a part-time Victim Champion and build partnerships with groups to enable the development of a consistent and meaningful approach across Surrey. He welcomed Members assistance in developing the mystery shopper approach.
- The Commissioner stated that there was a need for Police forces across the Country to communicate effectively to ensure criminals were caught, though he conceded that success was dependent on

other forces being willing to communicate. Though the current IT system was from 1996, it was hoped is hoped an upgrade would take place soon and communication would be effective.

RESOLVED: That

1. The Panel support the Police and Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan, in particular the qualitative approach to performance monitoring.
2. A letter be sent to the Police and Crime Commissioner, confirming the Panel's support and making the following recommendations:
 - a. That the Commissioner aims to include all areas of Surrey in any further consultations conducted by his Office.
 - b. That further consideration and emphasis be given in the Police and Crime Plan to how the Police will address issues relating to young people.
 - c. That the Commissioner shares with the Panel his proposals for mystery shopping, with the intention that Members help develop his approach.

11/13 COMPLAINTS RECEIVED SINCE THE LAST MEETING [Item 6]

The Chairman explained that the Panel had a statutory duty to resolve non-criminal complaints about the conduct of the Commissioner and his Deputy, and to remain aware of other complaints which fell outside this scope. It was stated that one complaint had been made against the Police and Crime Commissioner since its last meeting, details of which were contained within the report. This complaint was out of the scope of the Police and Crime Panel, however Membes were requested to note the content. The Commissioner confirmed that the issue was regarding an operational issue within the Police.

RESOLVED: That

1. The complaint was noted.

12/13 WEBCASTING OF POLICE AND CRIME PANEL MEETINGS [Item 7]

The Chairman clarified that the Police & Crime Panel had previously agreed to webcast the first two meetings with the Commissioner, and the Panel to then review the situation. Updated viewing figures for the last meeting on 6 February 2013 were also presented to the Panel which showed that archive views had risen to 71.

Members raised concerns regarding the cost of webcasting in relation to the number of views, though acknowledged that it was important for the Panel to remain open and transparent. It was suggested that it was too early to assess how successful webcasting was in relation to the Panel, and that it would be advisable to continue recording the meetings for a 12 month period and then review whether it was cost effective. Members additionally discussed the importance of promoting the Panel, and suggested that the public should be encouraged to attend or watch the meetings online.

RESOLVED: That

1. The Panel continue to webcast its meetings and review the situation in 12 months (March 2014).

13/13 CONSIDERATION OF EXEMPT INFORMATION AT MEETINGS OF THE SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL [Item 8]

The Chairman explained that the Panel had previously discussed the need to ensure that it operated in an open and transparent manner; however Members were aware that there would be occasions when they would need to consider exempt information during Part 2 private sessions.

Members felt it was important for the Panel to scrutinise all aspects of the Police and Crime Commissioner's role, including aspects which could not be discussed in public. It was agreed that officers would need to be informed of these exempt items prior to publication of the agenda, however if there was an emergency item there would be discretion to consider the matter at short notice.

RESOLVED: That

1. The protocol to enable exempt items to be considered by the Panel in Part 2 of the meeting was agreed, subject to the following amendment:
 - An additional clause be added to allow urgent matters to be considered at short notice, provided the Chairman was in agreement.

14/13 REFERRAL OF ISSUES FROM COUNTY COUNCIL AND BOROUGH / DISTRICT SELECT COMMITTEES TO THE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL [Item 9]

The Panel agreed the proposed method of referral between Surrey County Council's Communities Select Committee and the Police and Crime Panel. The mechanism discussed would enable issues relating to the work of the Police and Crime Commissioner to be considered by the Panel.

The proposal for the referral mechanism to be widened to allow referrals from all boroughs and districts was agreed by the Panel, though it was agreed that referrals would have to be on exceptional, Surrey-wide issues.

RESOLVED: That

1. The referral mechanism be agreed.
2. Items to be referred to the Police and Crime Panel should be Surrey-wide issues.

Meeting ended at: 12:45 pm

Chairman