

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

KENT AND MEDWAY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 5 February 2013.

PRESENT: Mr P M Hill, OBE (Chairman, Kent County Council), Cllr M O'Brien (Vice-Chairman, Medway Council), Cllr Mrs A Blackmore (Maidstone Borough Council), Cllr A H T Bowles (Swale Borough Council), Mr I S Chittenden (Co-optee Maidstone Borough Council), Cllr G Clarkson, CBE (Ashford Borough Council), Cllr P Fleming (Sevenoaks District Council), Cllr Mrs I Johnston (Thanet District Council), Mr D Jukes (Tunbridge Wells Borough Council), Cllr T Martin (Dartford Borough Council), Mr Dan McDonald (Independent Member) Cllr D Monk (Shepway District Council), Councillor A Perkins (co-optee Canterbury City Council) Cllr M Rhodes (Tunbridge and Malling Borough Council), Mr Gurvinder Sandher (Independent Member) Cllr P Todd (Canterbury City Council), and Cllr R Turpin, (Co-optee Medway Council)

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs A Barnes (Kent Police and Crime Commissioner), Ms K Nicholson (Policy and Research Officer) and Mr S Nolan (Chief Finance Officer)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr P Sass (Head of Democratic Services), Mr M Campbell (Policy Support Officer) and Mrs A Taylor (Democratic Services)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

11. Introduction/Webcast Announcement

(Item)

(1) The Chairman welcomed the guests and explained that the meeting would be webcast live.

12. Declarations of Interests by Members in Items on the Agenda for this Meeting

(Item 1)

(1) No Declarations of Interest were received

13. Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 29 November 2012

(Item 2)

(1) Councillor Mrs Johnston had been present at the last Panel meeting; this would be amended in the minutes.

RESOLVED that subject to the above amendment the minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2012 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

14. Decisions taken by the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner

(Item 3)

RESOLVED that the Panel noted the grade 3 decisions taken by the Commissioner.

15. Police and Crime Plan, Draft Budget, Precept and Medium Term Plan

(Item 4)

- (1) Mrs Barnes presented her draft Police and Crime Plan 2013 – 17 to members of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel.
- (2) The Commissioner outlined her proposals set out within the draft plan including her manifesto promise to recruit a Youth Commissioner and to set up mini mobile police stations.
- (3) The Commissioner also announced that she intended to give grants at the same level as in 2012/13 and the Panel commended her for finding the money necessary to offset an 11% reduction in the grant she received from Government for this purpose. The Panel noted the Commissioner's assurance that the grant should be used for projects rather than staff wherever possible.
- (4) The Commissioner thanked her staff and the Force for their work towards producing the draft plan.
- (5) Members asked questions around the Commissioner's commitment to increase visible policing. The Commissioner planned to increase the number of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) by 60 and the number of police officers by 20, by June 2013. The Panel noted the Commissioner's assurance that the Chief Constable supported her commitment to the increased visible resources. The Panel asked for information on the legal powers of PCSOs, and whilst members recognised that that this was an operational matter for the Chief Constable they asked that they be kept informed of any discussions the Commissioner had with the Chief Constable regarding an increase to the legal powers of PCSOs.
- (6) The Panel supported the Commissioner's intention to appoint a Youth Commissioner and recommended that, when appointed, the person should work closely with existing agencies and arrangements to engage with young people in Kent and Medway.
- (7) In response to a question about deaths and injuries on Kent and Medway's roads the Commissioner confirmed that this was high on her list of priorities and was contained within the plan under the 'Protecting the Public from Serious Harm'.
- (8) The Panel expressed interest in the Commissioner's Plan for mini mobile police stations and noted her assurance that they would not consume the same amount of staff resources as had previously been used to staff local police stations. A Member asked whether it was contradictory to close local police stations and then open mini mobile police stations but the Commissioner explained that footfall and resourcing meant that it was not viable to retain many local police stations. However, a mapping exercise would be undertaken with

the Force to set out current resource deployment throughout Kent and Medway and that information would be used to guide the decision-making on mobile police stations. The Panel agreed to ask the Commissioner to provide them with the outcome of the mapping exercise and to report back with the intended numbers and deployment. The Panel noted the Commissioner's assurance that her commitment to mobile police stations would be implemented by the end of 2013.

- (9) The Panel discussed the Commissioner's intention to pilot the concept of Local Policing Forums, starting in Maidstone. The Panel stressed that Forums must work closely with existing democratic structures and recommended that the Commissioner should provide information to the Panel in due course on what the Forums are achieving and how they are working with existing democratic structures.
- (10) In response to a question about the intention within the draft plan to 'build an efficient and effective criminal justice system' the Commissioner confirmed that she saw herself as a facilitator for ensuring that relevant partners in the criminal justice system got together to discuss the pertinent issues to allow the system to improve.
- (11) Referring to page 18 of the plan a member of the Panel requested that bullet point 3 be amended to read "Work with housing associations *and social housing providers*".
- (12) A Member of the Panel raised a point about the use of CCTV, the Commissioner agreed to take the comments back to the Chief Constable.
- (13) The Panel drew attention to the apparent link between alcohol, drugs and crime and recommended that the Commissioner investigate the possibility of compiling some statistics to identify the extent to which alcohol and/or drugs were influencing crime statistics.
- (14) The draft plan, and the Commissioner's responsibilities, extends to the residents of both Kent and Medway but the Panel commented that there was only a very limited number of occasions when Medway was specifically referred to in the draft Plan. The Panel felt it important to make the scope of the Plan clear and recommended that the Commissioner increase the number of specific reference to "Kent and Medway" within the final plan.
- (15) The Commissioner advised the Panel that she had found support for her proposed precept increase both during her election campaign and in her consultations on the draft plan and budget. The Panel noted the Commissioner's explanation that, although she could have received a 1% one-off Government grant increase had she chosen not to increase the precept this might have created a financial problem in 2014/15 and could not sensibly have been used to increase staff, which was her reason for raising the precept. The Panel asked the Commissioner why she had not increased the precept by 3.6%, which she could have done without a referendum and noted her explanation that she judged 2% to be both necessary and reasonable.

- (16) Councillor Mrs Johnston proposed that the Panel approve the proposed precept of £141.47 for a Band D property in 2013/14, a 2% increase on the 2012/13 level, this was put to the vote and the proposal was carried.

RESOLVED that:

- (17) The Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel thank the Commissioner and her staff for attending the meeting and for answering members' questions;
- (18) The Panel to be informed of the outcome of any discussions between the Commissioner and the Chief Constable on PCSO powers;
- (19) The Panel to be provided with the outcome of the police resource deployment mapping exercise and details of the intended numbers and deployment of mobile police stations; and
- (20) The Commissioner's proposed precept for 2013/14 be approved
- (21) The Commissioner publicises the powers of PCSOs;
- (22) The Youth Commissioner, when appointed, should work closely with existing agencies and arrangements to engage with young people in Kent and Medway;
- (23) The Commissioner provides information to the Panel in due course on what the Local Policing Forums are achieving and how they are working with existing democratic processes;
- (24) The Commissioner investigates the possibility of compiling some statistics to identify the extent to which alcohol and /or drugs were influencing crime statistics;
- (25) The Commissioner increases the number of specific references to "Kent and Medway" within the final Police and Crime Plan; and
- (26) The Commissioner shares her thinking on grants for 2014/15 with the Panel at the earliest possible stage.

16. Complaints Sub-Panel - Terms of Reference and Membership

(Item 5)

- (1) The Chairman introduced the report and explained that following some negotiation with members the membership of the complaints sub-panel would be as follows:

Councillor Mike O'Brien (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Gerry Clarkson
Councillor Pat Todd
Councillor Mrs Iris Johnston
Councillor Ian Chittenden

Mr Dan McDonald and Mr Gurvinder Sandher would share the role as the Panel's independent member, but it should be noted that the same member should deal with

a particular complaint from beginning to end for reasons of consistency and natural justice, particularly if, for whatever reason, the sub-panel decided to defer consideration of any particular complaint.

RESOLVED that the Complaints sub-panel be established with the above membership and with Terms of Reference as set out in paragraph 1.2 of the report.

17. Dates of future meetings
(Item 6)

RESOLVED that the dates of future meetings be noted.