

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 Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 28 May 2014.

PRESENT: Mr P M Hill, OBE (Chairman), Cllr R Turpin (Vice-Chairman), Cllr P Clokie, Cllr P Todd, Cllr M Conolly (Substitute) (Substitute for Cllr Mrs S Chandler), Cllr J Burden, Cllr Mrs A Blackmore, Cllr L Wicks, Cllr P Fleming, Cllr M Dearden, Cllr K Pugh (Substitute) (Substitute for Mr A H T Bowles), Cllr Campbell (Substitute) (Substitute for Cllr Mrs I Johnston), Cllr M Rhodes, Cllr C Derrick, Mr R A Latchford, OBE, Mr G Cowan, Mr I S Chittenden, Mr Dan McDonald and Mr Gurvinder Sandher

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs A Barnes, Mr M Stepney and Mr S Nolan (Chief Finance Officer)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr M Campbell (Policy Officer) and Mrs A Taylor (Scrutiny Research Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

72. Election of Chairman (Item 1)

1. The Scrutiny Officer (KCC) asked for nominations for Chairman of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel.
2. Mr R Latchford proposed and Councillor P Clokie seconded that Mr M Hill be elected Chairman. No other nominations were received.

RESOLVED that Mr M Hill be elected Chairman of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel.

73. Election of Vice-Chairman (Item 2)

1. The Chairman of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel asked for nominations for Vice-Chairman of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel.
2. Councillor J Burden proposed and Councillor P Clokie seconded that Mr Sandher be elected Vice-Chairman.
3. The Chairman then asked for any other nominations.
4. Councillor L Wicks proposed and Mr D McDonald seconded that Councillor R Turpin be elected Vice-Chairman.
5. The Chairman put these proposals to the vote:

Mr Sandher: 9 votes

Councillor Turpin: 6 votes

RESOLVED that Mr Sandher be elected Vice-Chairman of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel.

74. Membership

(Item 5)

1. The Panel noted the following membership changes:

- a. Councillor P Clokie replaced Councillor G Galpin representing Ashford Borough Council,
- b. Councillor P Campbell replaced Councillor Mrs I Johnston representing Thanet District Council,
- c. Councillor C Derrick replaced Councillor J Cunningham representing Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

75. Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel held on 4 February 2014

(Item 7)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2014 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

76. Urgent Item - Cutting Edge Documentary - Meet the Commissioner

(Item)

1. The Chairman introduced an urgent item to the agenda, the Cutting Edge documentary, 'Meet the Commissioner' which had been the subject of intense media speculation over the previous few days.
2. The Chairman proposed that as Members had not yet seen the whole documentary, only selected clips, the Panel Chairman and Vice-Chairman could make a decision, once the documentary had aired, on whether the Panel needed to meet to have a further discussion about the documentary. A provisional date of 5 June was put into the diary; a decision would be taken on Friday 30 May to decide whether the Panel meeting should go ahead.

RESOLVED that the Panel agree the Chairman's proposed way forward, that the provisional date of 5 June be put into the diary and a decision be taken, by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman on 30 May to confirm whether that meeting would go ahead.

77. Management of Public Engagement Responsibilities

(Item B1)

1. The Commissioner introduced this item, and explained that an Executive Summary had been produced. Commissioners were charged with being the link between local people and the police to bring local people's views to the policing priorities in the Police and Crime Plan. A comprehensive engagement strategy

was essential due to the geographical area of Kent and its population. The report contained a list of the engagements undertaken by the Commissioner as it was important to reach as wide an audience as possible. Paragraph 2 of the report set out the strategy with a mixture of traditional, online and social media to feedback local people's views to the police. The Commissioner gave an example that the Chief Constable was altering the policing model in Kent to give it a more local focus. This is because the feedback to the Commissioner was that the police and communities were slightly stepping back from each other. Efforts were made to be as imaginative as possible in terms of engaging with the public to underpin strategic priorities within the Police and Crime Plan.

2. The Commissioner's engagement strategy was noted and she was asked whether the views of the public varied across Kent. The Commissioner confirmed that there was a general theme, as set out on page 14 of the report – emerging priorities such as visible community policing, turnover of Community Support Officers, Powers of PCSOs and rural policing issues.
3. In response to a question about overcoming the public perception that the police were becoming more distant the Commissioner explained that following the new policing model, which it was hoped would go live on 24 June 2014, the Commissioner had offered to visit local council leaders and councillors, to explain that the policing model was based on the local agenda, putting resources back under the control of the local district inspector. Every district would have its own Chief Inspector working with the Community Safety Partnerships and local council about local issues.
4. A Member asked how the time spent on public engagements compared with the time spent on other responsibilities. The Commissioner explained that public engagement was very much part of the job, the Commissioner had produced two Police and Crime Plans and delivered all manifesto promises. Kent was on track to have a victim centre and work had been undertaken with the Chief Constable to ensure that Kent's crime recording figures were the best in the country in addition to working closely with the Force on their finances.
5. A Member asked about the significance of Twitter and what it had achieved. The Commissioner explained that as a new form of communication, twitter, and other forms of social media were the future, it was quick, used by many people and could not be ignored.
6. A Member asked the Commissioner whether any analysis of twitter followers, demographics for example, was planned. It was thought that this might give further clarity to members on the impact of the Commissioner's social media policy. The Commissioner confirmed that the next meeting of the Panel would receive a breakdown of the correspondence received by the Office of the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner, a lot of that was received via social media and this point would be followed up. Social media responses were sent from the Commissioner, or through her communications team.
7. Regarding the powers of Police Community Support Officers, this was an operational matter which was the responsibility of the Chief Constable and was constantly kept under review.

8. The Chairman suggested that rather than there being one key link between the local communities and policing, there were a number of links and this could be reworded to say 'one of the key links'

RESOLVED that the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel note the Commissioner's report Management of Public Engagement Responsibilities.

78. Mental Health Concordat
(Item B2)

1. The Chairman explained that the Panel had requested this report, in view of the national work on this process and to ask the Commissioner to bring the Panel up to date with the work in Kent.
2. The Commissioner explained that she had discussed this with the Chief Constable at the previous Governance Board and stressed that operational delivery of the Concordat was the responsibility of the Chief Constable.
3. It was a good news story, with partnership working being key to the delivery of the mental health concordat. The concordat aimed to improve the experience of people suffering mental illness should they come into contact with the criminal justice system. This would be achieved by a more joined up level of care between the police and NHS through treatment from trained professionals. The Commissioner had invested £75,000 into a street triage pilot to enable a mental health expert to work with the police to ensure the triage process was as effective as possible. This would free up police and NHS time – primarily in A&E . There was an aim to sign a local concordat in Kent and the report set out the next steps for the Kent Concordat, including a place for safety for young people.
4. The Commissioner explained that in 2013, 500 children, nationally, in mental health crisis ended up in Police custody.
5. The Panel welcomed the report, but a member asked for confirmation that all partners were working together on this issue. The Commissioner confirmed that the work being done, particularly with the health service, was much more advanced, and this issue would continue to be discussed at the Governance Board.
6. A Member asked how the local concordat fitted with the national concordat and the Commissioner confirmed that this was work in progress and would be brought back to a future meeting of the Panel.

RESOLVED that the Panel note the Commissioner's update on the progress of the Mental Health Concordat and look forward to receiving a report back at a future meeting – particularly with regard to the local arrangements.

79. Domestic Abuse
(Item B3)

1. This report was requested by the Panel. The Commissioner explained that during November 2013 HMIC carried out a national inspection mandated by the Home Secretary. Domestic Abuse counted for one third of all violent crime. HMIC reported that Kent had a number of good areas of practice. For instance, Kent Police took a proactive approach to dealing with Domestic Abuse and for every 100 Domestic Abuse crimes recorded in Kent there were 89 arrests, other forces varied between 45 – 90 arrests. HMIC's recommendations were set out within the report and there had been significant progress with the 'recommendations action plan'. A joint campaign on Domestic Abuse was being funded by the Commissioner and would begin just before the World Cup. The Community Safety Partnerships were also delivering a number of initiatives at the same time. A project was also being developed to support the children affected by Domestic Abuse. Domestic Abuse was also high on the agenda of the Kent Community Safety Partnership.
2. With regard to digital cameras, they had been purchased and used for those officers likely to end up dealing with domestic abuse incidents. The Commissioner's Chief of Staff explained that the force also had a joint bid to the Government's innovation fund with Essex for body worn cameras and supporting infrastructure. The initial pilot would involve 400 front line officers being issued with body worn cameras. A further bid to extend the pilot to the entire workforce had been submitted. It was hoped that the results of the second bid to the innovation fund would be back by the end of June.
3. A Member asked about the numbers of referrals of children over a period of two years, on page 31 of the report, the Commissioner would report back on the figures. Medway had a pilot with the force to ensure that the schools were made aware of any child subject to a domestic abuse incident. This would be investigated further; the safeguarding boards could also be used.
4. The Domestic Abuse campaign was being funded by the Commissioner so it was yet to be determined whether it was a long term campaign
5. In response to a question about the follow up process for the arrests associated with Domestic Abuse incidents, a lot of work had been done around training for all officers and an awareness of the importance of contact with victims. The Commissioner explained that there was a comprehensive training package with the Home Secretary personally monitoring Domestic Abuse improvements. In addition there was a further HMIC inspection coming up. In relation to the training for officers to deal with domestic abuse incidents, the Commissioner was asked how she would know that the training had been effective. A public People board had been set up, which had a remit to look at a number of aspects of workforce related matters – one of which would include training. The Commissioner envisaged this may be the appropriate forum to monitor the effectiveness of DA training.
6. Members were aware that the Met Police used body worn cameras in domestic abuse incidents to ensure that prosecutions were more likely to be successful with the evidence from the camera. There had been a similar discussion at the Governance Board but there were issues with the storing of electronic information, this was being investigated further (refer to paragraph 2 above)

7. In response to a question about the victims of domestic abuse, the Commissioner explained that an e-package had been developed, all new recruits received specific training and victims were encouraged to come and speak to the force about their experiences.
8. A Member raised the importance of 'hidden' domestic abuse, through financial abuse and the impacts on different communities and cultures. The Commissioner had recently attended a Domestic Abuse event for women, the campaign would be targeted at different groups of people, to reach as wide an audience as possible.
9. It was important to ensure that the police attended crimes as quickly as possible and that the cameras did not delay officers - the Commissioner confirmed that it was a rolling programme and was a start.
10. In response to a question the Commissioner explained that the HMIC report stated that Kent was very good at dealing with the critical risks, the recommendations focussed on dealing with medium and standard risks and where these could be managed better.

RESOLVED that the Police and Crime Panel note the Commissioner's report on Domestic Abuse.

80. Stage 2 Staff Transfers from PCC to Chief Constable
(Item B4)

1. This report was requested by the Panel. The Commissioner explained there had been delays with the Home Office (these had related to queries concerning terms and conditions) but the necessary assurances had been provided and the plans were approved by the Home Secretary without amendment. The transfer took place on 1 April. All staff were transferred to the Chief Constable with the exception of the Office of the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner, the Corporate Communications Team and the Satisfaction Survey Team. The Commissioner noted that there was no set model for stage 2 transfers, it should be agreed with the Chief Constable and be a model that best suits local needs.
2. In order to come to the best long term solution, there was ongoing work by the force and Commissioner's office. Of note, the evolved policing model complemented the Chief Constable and Commissioner's wish to see a force truly engaged with the community.
3. In response to a query about why the Communications Team were not transferred over, the Commissioner confirmed that in the future there might be a shared team, and no long term decisions had been made around the future operating model. The Commissioner noted that in practice nothing had changed, with the status quo maintained pending a long term decision. The Chairman asked for a further report on the model to allow the Panel to monitor how it was developing.

4. In response to a question over the location of the satisfaction survey team the Commissioner explained that it was early days, and the situation would be monitored.
5. The Commissioner was asked to share her engagement work with the Panel, this would be brought to a future meeting of the Panel.

RESOLVED that the Panel note the report on the Stage 2 Transfers and look forward to receiving a further report at a future meeting of the Panel.

81. Crime Figures in Kent *(Item B5)*

1. This report was requested by the Panel in light of the 10% increase in recorded crime in Kent. The Commissioner explained that in early 2013 she had asked HMIC to undertake an audit of crime recording in Kent. This demonstrated a 90% accuracy rate however this was not considered satisfactory by both HMIC and the Commissioner, therefore the Force put in place an action plan to tackle. Following regular audits the accuracy rate is now 96-97%. Crime recording figures were improved by process improvement, cultural reform and training in order to move away from a target driven culture. Following Kent's inspection HMIC are inspecting every force in the country. 13 have been completed with an overall accuracy rate of 80%. Of note, some were significantly lower. On a rolling programme there was a 10% increase in recorded crime-6% was due to better recording, 2% was 'back record conversions', re-categorising closed crimes previously recorded as no crime, 0.5% was an increase in pro-activity; with the actual increase in recorded crime being estimated at 1.5%. The Chief Constable has predicted that next year the 10% increase will be wiped out. HMIC is due to return to Kent but they will be looking at the old figures to get a national picture, this gives a mixed message and was unfair, however they will then return to inspect Kent a third time to provide an accurate picture of the current practice.
2. A Member questioned the clear up rates and the arrangements around the deployment of police vehicles. The Commissioner explained that clear up rates were determine through the crime being committed and solved. Page 38 (4) of the report set out the classification of crimes, there were 18 possible outcomes. The Commissioner would send the Councillor (and the Panel) some further detail.
3. A Member questioned the 6% error in recording, was this consistent across all areas of crime? The Commissioner explained that HMIC and the Home Office had analysed the crime figures and accepted the figures. Next year it was predicted that other forces' crime recording figures would increase although there is a sense that actual crime levels would remain the same, they are just more fully recorded.
4. In response to a question about monitoring the performance of the Chief Constable without the use of targets the Commissioner explained that activity is skewed by targets, the only target now is to give a quality service. The Chief Constable's Culture Board is also looking at behaviours and victim satisfaction levels with the force were 86.8%. The Commissioner offered to report back to the Panel when the work was complete.

5. A Member asked for real figures within the report rather than percentages, this would be provided in future.
6. With regard to victim satisfaction around racist incidents, the Commissioner explained that this would be taken back to the satisfaction survey team, there was an opportunity to ensure that the right information was being provided and the Commissioner agreed to report back on this issue to Members.
7. The Commissioner and the Force were applauded by Members for their efforts in dealing with crime recording, however it was necessary to focus on the performance of the Police, the Panel looked forward to seeing the accurate crime figures after the new regime had been in use for one year in September 2014 – this would be kept under review by the Panel.

RESOLVED that the Panel note the Commissioner's report on Crime Figures in Kent and welcome a report back on the work being undertaken around crime figures and recording in Kent.

82. Commissioner's Decisions *(Item C1)*

1. A Member asked what 'local' meant in relation to Victims Services, the Commissioner confirmed that it referred to Kent.
2. In relation to the cost of Deloitte's, the Commissioner's Chief of Staff explained that Deloitte's had been contracted under the Government's enabling structures, they would be assisting the Chief Constable in his preparing for CSR2 and onwards, assisting the force in delivering greater efficiency. They would also bring project management expertise to assist in delivering the victim's centre in Kent.
3. Deloitte's were commissioned to ensure that the best of the private sector could be utilised to look at new and innovative ways of working etc. The aim was for the staff to be the best they could be.
4. The length of contract with Deloitte's was an initial 7 week scoping exercise, it was an enabling contract provisionally for a year but that could be extended or reduced as necessary. The Commissioner explained that the Chief Constable had identified four work strands which would be useful for Deloitte's to review, any decisions made in these areas had to be future proofed.
5. In relation to the Legal Executives appointed, this was being funded by the Commissioner but this would be reviewed for the future.

RESOLVED that the Panel note the Commissioner's Decisions report.

83. Future work programme *(Item D1)*

1. Mr Campbell explained that the programme would be amended in light of the offers made by the Commissioner for reports back to the Panel.

RESOLVED that the Panel note the Future Work Programme report.

84. Actions following the informal Panel discussions with the Commissioner
(Item D2)

1. This was a report back from the informal away day in February, discussions had taken place with regard to the website and the Commissioner's Office over the issues raised. Members were asked to provide links to the Panel's webpage when it was finalised. It was suggested that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman liaised following each meeting of the Panel to issue any press releases necessary. The report contained a summary of the conclusions following the discussion with the Commissioner.
2. In response to a comment about responding to media requests as local authority members Mr Campbell reminded Members that there was an Information Protocol which had been approved by Members which stated that with respect to comments made on behalf the Panel to the media, these should be from the Chairman unless there had been previous agreement that another member should represent the Panel.

RESOLVED that the Panel note the report.

85. Complaints report
(Item D3)

1. This report was requested by the Panel from the Officers of the Panel with regarding to the Panel's role in complaints. Mr Campbell explained that the Panel's responsibility was to deal with complaints about the Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent. There had been 7 purported complaints, 4 had been recorded and 3 not recorded, the statutory regulations contained firm rules around the recording of complaints and the disapplication of the regulations. No complaints had been recorded and passed to the Panel.
2. Experience in other authorities had been different and numerous complaints had been received, however many of these related to alleged failure to deal with correspondence and officers had been assured by the Commissioner's office that there was a robust process in place to deal with correspondence. Paragraph 4.3 of the report suggested a tightening up of the policy to ensure that Panel Officers and Members heard about purported complaints.
3. The Commissioner was congratulated on the lack of complaints received by her office.
4. In response to a question about 'regulations disappplied' Mr Campbell explained that the regulations included a list of situations where they could be disappplied, such as a complaint being anonymous, vexatious or already been subject of another complaint for example.

5. In relation to the sub-panel the Panel Officers would write to Members to update the Membership of the sub-panel.

RESOLVED that Members note the complaints report.

86. Minutes of the Commissioner's Governance Board meeting held on 5 February 2014

(Item E1)

1. This report was for information only, it was pleasing that a number of Members had been able to attend the Governance Boards, the Commissioner echoed this view.

RESOLVED that the Panel note the minutes of the Commissioner's Governance Board meeting.