

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 Tuesday, 12 April 2016.

PRESENT: Mr P M Hill, OBE (Chairman), Mr A H T Bowles, Cllr P Clokie, Cllr J Cubitt, Cllr M Dearden, Cllr M Franklin, Cllr P Fleming, Cllr B Luker, Cllr K Morris, Cllr Sloan, Mr T L Shonk, Cllr P Todd, Cllr R Wells (Substitute) (Substitute for Cllr C Shippam), Mr R A Latchford, OBE, Cllr H Tejan, Dr M R Eddy and Cllr J Burden

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs A Barnes, Mr A Harper and Mr S Nolan

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

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

165. Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel held on 2 February 2016

(Item 4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2016 were an accurate record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

166. 2015/16 Kent Police and Crime Commissioner's - Annual Report

(Item B2)

- (1) The Commissioner introduced her Annual Report for 2015/16. She explained that there was a statutory duty on Commissioners to provide an Annual Report and that it documented progress made between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016 in meeting the objectives within the Police and Crime Plan. The Commissioner offered her thanks to her officers, in particular to her Head of Policy Co-ordination and Research for their help in producing the document.
- (2) The Commissioner set out the key highlights of the report, including the amazing work of the Special Constabulary. Special Constables in Kent had provided over 100,000 hours of policing during the year. There had been significant investment in training for Special Constables and they provided an extremely valuable service to the residents of Kent.
- (3) In terms of putting victims and witnesses at the heart of policing, highlights had included the opening of Compass House in Ashford, the centre for care and advice for victims and witnesses of crime in Kent; and Beech House, Kent's Sexual Assault Referral Centre through which 500 victims had received help and support.
- (4) The Commissioner also referred Members to the annual HMIC PEEL Assessment. Based on this annual assessment, HMIC had judged Kent Police to

be one of the top performing forces in the country. The Commissioner offered her thanks to her Chief Finance Officer for his contribution to the positive assessment of financial management. In response to a question about future work on reducing Domestic Abuse (DA) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) the Commissioner explained that in relation to CSE she had given £200,000 funding each year for three years to support a multi-agency team including Kent County Council, Medway Council, Education and Health. In relation to DA, areas for improvement identified within HMIC's vulnerability assessment had now been delivered. There had also been an increase in first time reporting of DA incidents which the Commissioner said was positive as it demonstrated that victims had confidence in reporting to the police and receiving the help they required.

- (5) In response to a question the Commissioner confirmed that her biggest regret of 2015 was the refusal of the Home Office to reimburse the money spent on Operation Stack. However the Commissioner also confirmed that Home Office officials had undertaken to work with the Office of the Commissioner to look at potential alternative funding streams to cover future Operation Stack costs.
- (6) A Member referred to the threat from terrorism and the increase in firearms capability in Kent. The Commissioner confirmed that following the increase in council tax precept for 2016/17 the additional funding raised would pay for 24 of the 37 additional firearms officers the Chief Constable needed. The Commissioner explained that recruiting firearms officers was not easy and Members offered alternative routes to follow such as the Civic Nuclear Constabulary at Dungeness and Ministry of Defence police at the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory as areas where officers may be drawn from. The Commissioner confirmed that through mutual aid firearms officers would be shared in the event of an emergency but that the Chief Constable considered it necessary to have firearms officers available in Kent for a quick response.
- (7) The Commissioner also confirmed that the Chief Constable was exploring a range of options including approaching the army to identify those leaving who may wish to join the Force as firearms officers.
- (8) One Member queried why the increase in violent crime was not mentioned within the Annual Report and the Commissioner confirmed that there had been a small increase in low level violent crime, and pointed out that many incidents classified as violent crime involved no injury.

POST MEETING NOTE: the increase in violent crime was referred to within the Annual Report at page 50 of the Agenda reports pack.

RESOLVED that the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel note the 2015/16 Kent Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Report and that the Chairman be authorised to approve the Panel's report on the Annual Report.

167. Review of Police & Crime Commissioner's Term of Office

(Item B1)

- 1) The Commissioner explained that the review of her term of office was to complement the statutory Annual Report.

- 2) A Member asked whether the Commissioner believed the role had benefitted Kent or whether the previous Police Authority model was more beneficial. The Commissioner explained that she would not criticise the work of Kent Police Authority. However it was very bureaucratic and the Office of the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner allows one person to react quicker. She considered that there were pros and cons to both systems.
- 3) A Member asked about the challenges of the next four years. The Commissioner explained that these were contained within the Police and Crime Plan which would stand until the new Commissioner decided to change it. The biggest challenge was to 'square the circle' between visible local policing and new and emerging crime threats.
- 4) In response to a question about the proposal to give responsibility for the Fire Service to Police and Crime Commissioners, the Commissioner explained that the Police and the Fire Service in Kent already work well together, but there were further opportunities to share property and work smarter together.

RESOLVED that the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel note the Commissioner's Review of her Term of Office.

168. Published Data on Alleged Assaults by Police Officers - Verbal Update
(Item B3)

- 1) This item was requested by Dr Eddy, a Member of the Kent Police and Crime Panel following a question from the BBC on published data on alleged assaults by police officers.
- 2) The Commissioner explained that between 2011 and November 2015 there had been:
 - a. 557 assault allegations made against Kent police officers
 - b. 16 allegations upheld
 - c. None resulted in a dismissal
- 3) The Commissioner considered that Kent Police dealt with complaints robustly and fairly with investigations free from bias. The Office of the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner received regular management reports and dip sampled and monitored case files. Any areas of concern were discussed on a quarterly basis and issues were also raised at the Governance Board.
- 4) The Commissioner also stated that the investment in Body Worn Cameras was likely to reduce complaints against police officers. The Commissioner's Chief of Staff confirmed that half the cameras had been rolled out, with the full roll-out due to be completed within the next couple of months.
- 5) The Commissioner explained that the Government was reforming the way in which police complaints were handled with greater involvement by Police and Crime Commissioners. The Commissioner said it would be for her successor to decide the extent of this involvement.

RESOLVED that the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel note the Commissioner's verbal update relating to alleged assaults by police officers.

169. Commissioner's Key decisions: January to March 2016

(Item C1)

RESOLVED that the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel note the Commissioner's Key Decisions: January to March 2016.

170. 2015/16 Complaints against the Police and Crime Commissioner - Annual Report

(Item D1)

- 1) The Police and Crime Panel Policy Officer (KCC) explained that there had been no complaints upheld throughout the Commissioner's term of office.

RESOLVED that the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel note the 2015/16 Annual Report on complaints against the Police and Crime Commissioner.

171. Future work programme

(Item D2)

RESOLVED that the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel note that the future work programme of the Panel will be compiled once the new Commissioner has taken up office following the election in May 2016.

172. Minutes of the Commissioner's Governance Board meeting held on 3 February 2016

(Item E1)

RESOLVED that the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel note the minutes of the Commissioner's Governance Board meeting held on 3 February 2016.

173. Conclusion of meeting

(Item)

- 1) At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chairman paid tribute to Mrs Barnes' involvement in policing in Kent both as Police and Crime Commissioner and as Chair of the former Police Authority. On behalf of the Panel, the Chairman thanked Mrs Barnes for the huge amount of hard work put in for the people of Kent and offered his very best wishes for the future.