

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 on Thursday, 27 September 2018.

PRESENT: Mr P M Hill, OBE (Chairman), Mr Gurvinder Sandher (Vice-Chairman), Mrs L Game, Cllr F Gooch, Ms S Hamilton, Cllr R Hogarth (Substitute), Cllr A Horton, Cllr J Knight, Cllr P Todd, Cllr R Wells, Cllr M Eddy, Mrs E Bolton and Cllr M Rhodes (Substitute)

ALSO PRESENT: Mr M Scott (Kent Police and Crime Commissioner), Mr A Harper (PCC's Chief of Staff) and Mr Robert Phillips (PCC's Chief Finance Officer)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr J Cook (Scrutiny Research Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

283. Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel held on 19 July 2018

(Item 4)

1. Responding to a question, the Clerk explained that planned update on the outcome of a Kent Police linked employment tribunal had been deferred pending further internal Kent Police reviews.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 July were a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

The Chairman advised the Panel and the Commissioner that Mike Campbell, Policy Officer, had stepped down from his role supporting the Panel for health reasons and he wished the gratitude of the Panel for all Mr Campbell's excellent work be recorded.

The Commissioner also formally noted Mr Campbell's contribution and wished it recorded that he and his Office recognised and were grateful for the tremendous support Mr Campbell had provided to the work of the Commissioner, his Officers, Kent Police, the Panel and the Police Authority before that.

284. Crime Data Integrity, Recorded Crime & Crime Outcomes

(Item B1)

1. The Commissioner introduced the report which was a follow-up to the previous report to the Panel in 2017 which highlighted the poor crime data accuracy once it had been identified via an HMIC inspection. The Commissioner reiterated that he and the Chief Constable had been surprised by the data integrity issue considering that Kent Police had been found to be performing very well in all other areas. The Commissioner explained that the Chief Constable had put an action plan in place to rectify the problem, at his direction.

2. The key feature of this action plan, in comparison to the follow up work undertaken by Kent Police on this matter previously, was that HMIC had been closely involved in developing and implementing the solution, ensuring that the internal audit and recording processes put in place were in line with the requirements and expectations. It was expected that this would prevent a future decline in accuracy as had been seen following the inspection in 2014. The Commissioner reassured the Panel that the majority of recording 'errors' under the HMIC definition were related to counting rules and exactly how many crime reports should be created for the same incident, meaning that the data inaccuracy did not necessarily correlate with a failure to record criminal actions or support victims appropriately. In particular, the Commissioner commented that the Chief Constable had given assurances that in more serious cases related to serious violence or sexual assault, all victims had received the correct support even if their incident had not been recorded as an individual crime. The Commissioner advised that HMICFRS were returning to conduct a further inspection on this issue on 1 October and the Chief Constable expected the results to show a level of 93 – 94% crime data accuracy, which was a good level nationally. The results of the inspection were expected in 2019.
3. The Commissioner provided an overview of recorded crime, as detailed in the report. He explained that the figures had been increasing, in line with an expectation that the work regarding data integrity would show an increase in recorded crime. However, he recognised that some of the increases represented genuine increases in crime. Usable data for like for like comparisons was expected in 2019.
4. The Commissioner advised the Panel that consideration of context surrounding the crime figures was important as the focus for Policing, as per his Plan, was on the high harm cases. There were low numbers for these, compared to the other volume crime issues but they were more serious. The Commissioner noted that while recorded crime was up all over the country, the National Crime Survey indicated that crime was levelling out. He commented that regardless of the number of crimes, it was important to carefully consider the outcomes being achieved, hence why an update on this had been provided in the report.
5. The Commissioner provided an update on crime outcomes, explaining the results of Police investigation and crime recording. He advised that, nationally, justice outcomes were down from 15% to 9% in 2017. In Kent, the number cases not progressed because the victim did not wish to support (IP decline) had risen. These IP decline outcomes made up over half of the recorded crimes where a named offender was not prosecuted.
6. Responding to questions, the Commissioner provided the following information:
 - The Commissioner was not aware of problems for Police accessing District Council CCTV, though he noted that in the past these processes had depended on good relationships between the staff involved. He hoped that the Asset Management System due in 2019 would assist in ensuring consistency. The Commissioner was more concerned about decisions locally to decommission CCTV given the impact this would have on crime investigation.
 - The reasons for the increase in violent crime were varied and not down to a single main factor; some was linked to domestic abuse, some was due to

crime recording changes. The Violence Reduction Strategy led by the Commissioner was expected to support managing this.

- The Commissioner confirmed that additional investment into the Investigation Management Unit and the Force Control Room had improved the service and were expected to make the improvements sustainable, particularly in terms of tackling violence against vulnerable people.
- The Commissioner recognised the risks around social media presenting a less positive view of the county, as people more often shared negative stories but did not share reassurance messages. He assured the Panel that Kent was a safe county.
- The Commissioner would work with Panel Officers to provide to further detail on justice outcomes for different crime types. He emphasised the importance of out of court disposals and other non-charge related outcomes such as community resolutions and restorative justice as these could better resolve the matter for the victim.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

285. Mental Health - Verbal Update

(Item B2)

1. The Commissioner provided an update on his work regarding Police involvement in mental health issues. He advised the Panel that he was seeking to revolutionise the approach to mental health, reviewing all the different aspects from both a police and partner agency perspective. He commented that HMICFRS have noted the serious issue that a large number of calls to Police are from other agencies regarding mental health.
2. The increase in s136 detentions showed that despite lots of good work being done to address the Police involvement in mental health, there was still high demand for police intervention and that the police were still supporting other agencies when required. The Commissioner commented that some of the recent changes to legislation had meant that other agencies had started to take on more work, reducing pressure slightly on the police.
3. To illustrate the impact of on frontline policing, the Commissioner explained that in June 2018 the average time spent at A&E with people detained under s136 was 7 hours and 47 minutes. As two officers were required for such activities this had equated to 1000 hours of Officer time, costing £30k.
4. The Commissioner explained that he had allocated funding from the Mental Health and Policing Fund to support work to tackle these issues. He advised that MIND workers would continue in the FCR until August 2019 (with the potential for further extension). The Commissioner also highlighted the work of the review of mental health legislation being led by Professor Sir Simon Wesley.
5. Responding to questions, the Commissioner confirmed that the key challenges facing Kent Police and him on this issue were the capacity within the mental health system and how some other partner agencies responded to mental health concern, with the continued expectation that the Police will always pick up the pieces. He noted that additional funding was being made available to the NHS

for mental health issues but he wanted to ensure it was spent appropriately in a way that would lead to sustainable improvements, otherwise Police would continue to be seen as the default service.

6. The Commissioner formally expressed his thanks to South East Cast Ambulance Trust for their hard and to contribution to the mental health programmes.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

286. Recruitment of Police Officers - Verbal Update *(Item B3)*

1. The Commissioner provided a verbal update on progress with the police recruitment campaign. He advised the Panel that 137 new joiners had gone in to the training college and over 500 applications were live throughout the various stages of the process. The Commissioner assured the Panel that the Chief Constable was confident of achieving the Police Officer establishment number of 3452.
2. The Commissioner thanked the recruitment team for their hard work, particularly given the very prescribed process which limited flexibility. He also advised the Panel that the different entry routes now available (Graduate entry and Investigate First) had helped attract more candidates.
3. The Commissioner explained that Kent Police was over establishment for PCSOs and that he aimed to maintain at least that figure as current staff left. He also commented that 5 volunteer PCSOs had started and work was underway to recruit more.
4. The Commissioner advised the Panel that he would soon be hosting the first ever Blue Light jobs fair. This would involve the Mental Health Trust, Probation, Ambulance service, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, Criminal Justice System and Kent Police. This would be held at North Kent College, Dartford, on 26 October 2018.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

287. Preparations for leaving the European Union *(Item B4)*

1. The PCC introduced his report, explaining that the process for exiting the EU had been triggered it was important for all responsible agencies to consider all necessary preparations. He advised that his role as Commissioner had been at a strategic level, working with all criminal justice agencies to make sure appropriate plans were in place. As part of this, he had been engaging locally and regionally to scope the key challenges.
2. The Commissioner outlined some of the particular issues, such as the Advance Passenger Information system, where Kent Police wanted access to more information on people coming in and out of the country via the ferry network. He also reassured the Panel that while preparations for public order incidents was necessary, significant civil unrest was not expected in Kent. He explained that all

Policing agencies in the UK had been preparing for the worst case scenario, given their role as emergency services. These preparations did not necessarily reflect likely issues.

3. The Commissioner explained that he was the national co-lead for PCCs and the Conservative spokesperson on Brexit. He advised the Panel that he had communicated the concerns to the Home Secretary which highlighted the need for consideration of a deal with the EU which covered the useful co-operation with European criminal justice agencies or that additional funding be made available to cover any additional costs to Kent Police related to Kent's position as a gateway to Europe. The Commissioner advised the Panel that he was due to meet with the Home Secretary about this matter soon.
4. The Commissioner reassured the Panel that there was a team of Officers at Kent Police working planning for a wide range of outcomes from Brexit but commented that some agencies may need to increase their preparedness. Responding to questions, he advised the Panel that the particular issues affecting Kent with a Police element, such as live animal exports and the transport network had been factored into the points raised with the Home Secretary in terms of necessary agreements or additional funding.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

288. Decision - Application for Pension Forfeiture
(Item C1)

No Comments.

RESOLVED that the decision be noted.

289. Decision - 7F Single Procurement Function
(Item C2)

1. The Commissioner explained that Kent was already engaging in significant collaboration with Essex which had supported this partnership taking a lead role in organising the wider collaboration within the 7F procurement arrangements.

RESOLVED that the decisions be noted.

290. Future work programme
(Item D1)

RESOLVED that further updates on Brexit be provided at future meetings as further information becomes available, and that the work programme be noted.

291. Questions to the Commissioner
(Item)

Question 1: Can the Commissioner advise the Panel how he is working with the Chief Constable to ensure that the Kent Police estate (Police Houses, Stations and other buildings around the county) is being used effectively in terms of sustainable

operational functions, community benefit and partnership working and that this work takes account of the needs of victims of crime and the views of local communities?
(Cllr Sarah Hamilton)

1. The Commissioner explained that he and the Chief Constable kept the Police estate under regular review. He noted that as visible policing was priority within the Policing Plan that considering a modern and collaborative approach estate management formed a part of this review process. As part of this collaborative approach, consideration was being given to sharing premises with other blue light agencies and there were already good examples of this working well, such as having Kent Fire and Rescue based in the Police Force Control Room (FCR), the Central Referral Unit at Ashford which had multi-agency staffing and Compass House which linked victim and witness services together.
2. Cllr Hamilton, as a follow up question, queried whether due consideration had been given to the future needs of the Force in terms of the expected growth in the county and asked for reassurance that financial gain from disposal of any estates was balanced against potential increased estate needs for the Force. The Commissioner confirmed that these issues were considered carefully, with a drive to balance public need against the cost of maintaining estates. He highlighted the example of Ashford Station where it would be more financially sound to sell the property and move the station but the community benefit of a centrally based station continued to outweigh the financial benefit for now.

Question 2: In the last Annual Report by the previous Commissioner, she stated that the number of police officers had been reduced by 518 due to reductions in funding during her tenure. In subsequent Annual Reports, there have been references to a desire to recruit some 400 police officers within 18 months, but the establishment figures would suggest that that target was not achieved. Can the Police and Crime Commissioner tell the Panel what the police officer establishment has been since 2009/10 at the end of each financial year and when will the objective of recruiting 400 officers actually be achieved?

(Dr Mike Eddy)

3. The Commissioner clarified that his announcement had been for the recruitment of 400 officers, which would mean an increase to establishment of around 200 (220 Officers need to be recruited each year to avoid drop in establishment figure). Providing the staff numbers as requested, the Commissioner advised that the establishment figure for Police officers of the requested period was:
 - 2010 – 3787
 - 2016 – 3182
 - 2017 – 3261
 - 2019 – 3452 (planned)
4. Responding to Dr Eddy's follow up question as to the appropriateness of the establishment figure in terms of the challenges facing Policing, the Commissioner advised the Panel that he did not think that the Officer numbers were high enough. He had supported the significant recruitment of Officers because more were needed and he would like to see even greater increases in Officers numbers. He was grateful for the support of the Panel for the police precept increases proposed in recent years as these had made the recruitment possible.

RESOLVED that the Commissioner's answers be noted.

292. Minutes of the Commissioner's Performance and Delivery Board meeting held on 31 May 2018
(Item F1)

RESOLVED that the notes of the P&D Board held on 31 May 2018 be noted.