

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, 14 June 2016.

PRESENT: Mr P M Hill, OBE (Chairman), Mr Gurvinder Sandher (Vice-Chairman), Cllr P Clokie, Cllr M Dearden, Cllr M Franklin, Cllr P Fleming, Cllr A Horton, Cllr K Morris, Cllr Sloan, Cllr P Todd, Cllr Chris Wells (Substitute for Mr T L Shonk), Cllr F Wilson, Mr R A Latchford, OBE, Cllr H Tejan, Dr M R Eddy and Mrs E Bolton

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

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

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

174. Election of Chairman

(Item 2)

1. The Scrutiny Research Officer (KCC) asked for nominations for Chairman of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel.
2. Cllr P Clokie proposed and Cllr R Latchford 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.

175. Election of Vice-Chairman

(Item 3)

1. The Chairman proposed that Mr Sandher be elected Vice-Chairman of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel. This was seconded by Mrs Bolton and no other nominations were received.

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

176. Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel held on 12 April 2016

(Item 6)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 April be signed by the Chairman as an accurate record.

177. Appointment of Independent Co-opted Members

(Item 7)

1. Mrs Bolton and Mr Sandher left the Council Chamber whilst this item was discussed.
2. The Chairman introduced the officers' report and the Panel approved the Terms of Reference as amended and contained within the report. In relation to the Independent Members the Panel had the option to re-appoint the current Independent Members, or advertise and recruit externally. The Panel also had to decide the length of term to appoint the Independent Members for.
3. The Chairman said he supported the re-appointment of the two Independent Members; his view was that they had given a good service to the Panel, were committed and it was important to the Panel to have strong Independent Members. The Chairman's view was that they should be appointed to serve a four year term.
4. A Member asked whether there were any concerns given that one of the Independent Members was a candidate in the Police and Crime Commissioner election. It was confirmed that this did not cause a difficulty for any Members of the Panel. The Commissioner also confirmed that he supported Mr Sandher remaining as an Independent Member of the Panel.
5. One Member commented that she was content for the two Independent Members to be re-appointed, but that when their terms come to an end an external recruitment process should take place. In relation to their terms of office a Member considered it preferable to stagger them so that both Independent Members did not come to the end of their term at the same time.
6. Mr Campbell confirmed that the amended Terms of Reference, which had just been approved by the Panel, stated that no Independent Member would serve more than two successive terms. In response to the point about staggering the terms of office the cost of the recruitment process was raised and it was pointed out that it was more cost effective to recruit both Independent Members at the same time, rather than hold staggered interviews every other year.
7. One Member asked for confirmation about the terms of office of the Independent Members. Would they be allowed to serve two terms from their re-appointment in 2016, or would their previous membership of the Panel be taken into account? It was confirmed that the intention was to re-appoint the Independent Members for a further four years from November and hold an external recruitment process in November 2020.
8. One Member commented that the advertising process should begin well in advance of the end of their term.

RESOLVED that:

- The Panel agree the proposed revision to its Terms of Reference in relation the appointment of Independent Members.
- The Panel agree to re-appoint Mrs Bolton and Mr Sandher as Independent Members of the Panel in November 2016 for a further full four year term.

178. Confirmation Hearing - Commissioner's Chief of Staff

(Item 8)

1. The Commissioner introduced his report and explained that he wished to extend the appointment of his current Chief of Staff for a further two years until September 2018, rather than undertake a full recruitment process at this time. The Commissioner explained that as his Chief Finance Officer would be leaving the Office shortly he wished to maintain resilience and continuity amongst his statutory officers. The Commissioner stated that Mr Harper had been a great help since taking up office and had provided good advice to Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) candidates during the election, approaching it in a positive manner. The Commissioner continued by saying that Mr Harper had proved to be an effective manager who could deliver on commitments, meet deadlines and that he was content Mr Harper was best placed to help deliver his Six Point Plan and manifesto promises.

2. The Commissioner thanked Mr Harper for his work to date and said that he hoped the Panel would support the extension of Mr Harper's appointment for a further two years.

3. A Member asked why the extension to Mr Harper's contract was for two years rather than the full four years of the PCC's term. The Commissioner explained that as he had inherited his team he felt it was important to deliver a period of continuity and stability and it was therefore preferable to re-appoint Mr Harper for a further two years before running a full competitive process at that point. A four year extension would not allow the opportunity to conduct a full, transparent recruitment process during the Commissioner's term of office.

4. Another Member spoke about flexibility within the workforce and asked whether a one year extension would give more flexibility to the office, and also what performance and development review processes were in place. The Commissioner explained that a two year extension allowed him to work towards a medium-long term plan for the Office which a one year extension would not. It also provided more stability during the first half of his term in office. There would be regular performance management appraisals with performance goals, and the Commissioner offered to discuss further with the Member if appropriate.

RESOLVED that the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel concluded that the Commissioner had given sound reasons both for extending the appointment of Mr Harper and for choosing a two year extension. The Panel unanimously recommended the extension of Mr Adrian Harper's appointment for a further two years, until 30 September 2018. The Panel agreed that the formal report on the confirmation hearing be drafted by the officers to the Panel and approved by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

179. Introduction to the Commissioner (verbal report)

(Item 9)

1. The Chairman welcomed the Commissioner into his new role and said that he looked forward to a period of co-operation between the Panel and the Commissioner.

2. The Commissioner congratulated the Chairman and Vice Chairman on their re-election to those positions and said that he felt the Vice-Chairman, as a Police and

Crime Commissioner candidate, had run a principled and positive election campaign and he looked forward to working with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Panel Members in the future.

3. The Commissioner thanked his Office for the support he had received since his election in May and also thanked Mr Nolan, who he explained was leaving the Commissioner's Office later in the year.

4. The Commissioner said he came from a policing family and so had an understanding of the culture and processes within the police. The Commissioner had experience in supporting victims of crime and had also been a school governor and served as a councillor. The Commissioner outlined his Six Point Plan stating that he wants to cut crime and reduce re-offending, is committed to visible policing, wants to ensure value for money, through collaboration and better use of technology, and try to do more to support victims of crime. The Commissioner also said that he wanted to tackle the misery caused by anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse and violence and will particularly focus on mental health, reducing police time spent dealing with cases involving mental health by helping vulnerable people access the right support, providing officers and staff with appropriate training, but also ensuring officers and staff have access to the support they might need.

5. In terms of support already given, the Commissioner confirmed that at least 50 more PCSOs would be recruited to increase numbers back up to over 300. Mobile policing would focus on mobile devices to support officers working remotely and keeping them on the street for longer; funding had been approved for Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs); and also £450,000 approved for specialist victims services. In addition, extra funding had been provided to the Force to tackle the backlog of firearms licences. The Commissioner had also taken a salary reduction and was giving the money to two local charities – the details of which, for transparency purposes, were available on the Commissioner's website. The Commissioner said he was trying his best to get out and about, and on his first day he visited the Bluewater Safety Store which he considered an excellent resource and expressed his thanks to Bluewater for their support. The Commissioner is meeting local MPs and also with all Council Leaders. The Commissioner had visited the Domestic Abuse Victim Support Service (DAVSS), a charity supporting male victims of domestic abuse and also met with community groups such as 20's Plenty for Us. The Commissioner said that he looked forward to working with all Panel Members and offered to meet with any Member to discuss issues within their district.

6. A Member referred to visible policing. He said that in his area the police station was open for a couple of hours a day, and if a member of the public was arrested after the station was closed the individual would have to be taken to an alternative police station in a neighbouring town therefore removing policing resources from the streets. The Member asked how visible policing would be promoted with such constraints. The Commissioner understood the concern, and explained that he would be focussing on reducing the burden on police officers such as the time spent dealing with cases involving mental health. A pilot scheme involving counsellors from MIND was currently underway to support vulnerable people and this, combined with continued work with charities, would hopefully reduce the burden on police officers. Increased use of mobile technology and tablets would also reduce the time spent by officers travelling back and forth to an office to complete paperwork which could be completed remotely. The Commissioner confirmed that he would look into the

specific example, but there were a number of ways in which he aimed to free up officer time to make them more visible within communities.

7. Referring to firearms licences, and the gap between the cost and what was charged the Commissioner was asked for his view. The Commissioner explained that the cost of the licence was set nationally, full cost recovery was ideal but until that was possible it was necessary to effectively and efficiently manage the service. When more could be done online it was hoped that costs would reduce. The service did have to be properly resourced to ensure sufficient checks were undertaken and the processes robust. The Commissioner said that he hoped the overall cost could be addressed in the future.

8. Referring to CSPs, a Member asked for confirmation of their funding. The Commissioner explained that when he took up office he had a decision to make to approve the allocations made by his predecessor which were effectively a cash freeze on the previous year. In future he would ensure that CSPs had more sustainability in funding to support the development of two or three year plans.

9. The Chairman referred to the Commissioner's comments on mental health, and said that any partnership working on the issue would be welcomed. The Chairman also said that he chairs Domestic Homicide Reviews which had increased and nearly all the tragedies involved background issues of mental health. The Commissioner was pleased to have been invited to a KCC event on the future plans for mental health commissioning and children's emotional wellbeing.

10. The Vice-Chairman asked when the review of mental health and policing would begin and who would be involved. The Commissioner said that Terms of Reference were currently being drafted and it was hoped that KCC, charities and the NHS would be involved to look at the impact on policing and that he would welcome an input from any Member of the Panel.

11. Referring to the 20's Plenty for Us campaign a Member explained that one of the difficulties with this excellent project was that it was a joint piece of work between the Highways Authority and the police. The Member asked whether the Commissioner was looking to work with KCC through their Joint Transportation Boards to take forward 20's Plenty, how was this to be funded and would the police be enforcing 20 MPH speed limits. The Commissioner confirmed that he had met with 20's Plenty for Us the previous evening, and had asked the Force a range of questions about how 20 MPH speed limits are enforced, but considered that they do provide benefits, particularly around schools. The Commissioner said that if there were areas where Members/residents did not see the speed limit being enforced, he and his staff would look into it. The Member asked that the Panel have sight of the responses to the Commissioner's questions about 20's Plenty at a future meeting.

12. A Member raised a question about the challenges associated with illegal migration, the Commissioner confirmed that he was aware of the problems faced by Kent as the gateway to Europe and had already held discussions with relevant agencies. There was a need to be conscious of the responsible authority and the role of Kent Police.

13. A Member asked about CCTV in the county. He said that the Home Office had encouraged districts to install CCTV and this was now very costly to maintain, was

there any potential for the Commissioner to consider funding CCTV. The Commissioner said he was a strong supporter of CCTV; it could be used to deter and prevent crime and was an important tool for evidence gathering. In future the Commissioner said he would be reviewing all the funding that is available and he would be happy to receive any representations.

14. A Member asked how the Commissioner would hold the Chief Constable to account regarding reducing offending in prisons. The Commissioner explained that collaborative work would be undertaken with the prison service to ensure that the issues were being addressed. The Commissioner said that he has already met with the Prison Officers Association to discuss their concerns about drugs in prisons and attacks on staff, and he would be continuing to visit prisons in Kent and working closely with relevant agencies to ensure the issues are addressed. The Commissioner said he would take the issues up with the Chief Constable.

RESOLVED that the Police and Crime Panel note with thanks, the Commissioner's verbal introduction.

180. Mobile Policing Decision

(Item B1)

1. The Chairman welcomed the new format of the decision documents and thanked the Commissioner and his staff for the clear advice and background contained within.

RESOLVED that the Police and Crime Panel note the Commissioner's Decision.

181. Schemes of Consent Decision

(Item B2)

RESOLVED that the Police and Crime Panel note the Commissioner's Decision.

182. H&S Policy Statement Decision

(Item B3)

RESOLVED that the Police and Crime Panel note the Commissioner's Decision.

183. Chief Finance Officer recruitment Decision

(Item B4)

1. Mr Sandher asked whether a Panel Member would be invited to sit on the recruitment panel as an observer. The Commissioner confirmed that he would be more than happy to accommodate this.

RESOLVED that the Police and Crime Panel note the Commissioner's Decision.

184. Firearms Licensing additional funding Decision

(Item B5)

1. The Chairman commented that it was disappointing that the fees were not sufficient to cover the cost of issuing the firearms licence. The Commissioner explained that the cost of a licence had increased and he hoped there would

eventually be full cost recovery; however of vital importance was that there was a robust service to enable residents to abide by the law.

RESOLVED that the Police and Crime Panel note the Commissioner's Decision.

185. Future work programme
(Item C1)

1. The Chairman asked the Panel whether they wished to retain some of the reports on the work programme or start with a 'clean slate'. One Member wished to remove the pending items; however another Member wished to retain the update on cybercrime and the item on hate crime. It was considered that there were two vital issues from the Commissioner's introduction to the Panel, one being mental health (the scale of the problem) and the other being 20's Plenty, its feasibility and how reasonable the schemes were (the Commissioner confirmed that there were 811 20 MPH zones in Kent). Members asked how the Panel would receive reports on particular issues from the Commissioner's Plan? Mr Campbell explained that once the Commissioner had finalised his Police and Crime Plan a more detailed programme would be proposed to the Panel which would include the issues raised by Members.

2. One Member asked for an item on the protection of vulnerable people to review how the Commissioner was holding the Chief Constable to account on such topics.

3. Another Member considered that the Commissioner should take the themes suggested by the Panel on board when holding the Chief Constable to account.

4. One Member asked that the Panel receive an update on the Electoral Commission investigation in Thanet at their next meeting. The Commissioner pointed out that it was a live on-going investigation and that there would be limits on what he could say. Members queried the timescale of the investigation. The Commissioner said he would report to the Panel information that was publically available at the September meeting. Another Member was uncomfortable with the request as he regarded it as an operational policing matter and outside the role of the Panel and the Commissioner.

5. In response to a question the Commissioner confirmed that he would be retaining the Governance Board for the time being to ensure public scrutiny of the Chief Constable, the other Committees would be looked at on an individual basis. It was hoped that there would be more public engagement on a thematic basis in future. The Commissioner was asked for his view on inviting the Chief Constable to Panel meetings. The Commissioner said he had discussed this with the Chair, but his concern was that Panel meetings would then focus on operational policing matters. The Commissioner said that he was happy to engage in further discussion to find a way of supporting the Panel's request in the future.

RESOLVED that the Panel ask its officers, in consultation with the PCC's officers to propose a new work programme taking into account the views expressed by Panel Members.

186. Minutes of the Commissioner's Governance Board meeting held on 5th April 2016
(Item D1)

RESOLVED that the Police and Crime Panel note the Commissioner's Governance Board minutes.

The Chairman concluded the meeting by thanking Mr Nolan, the Commissioner's Chief Finance Officer, for his service to the Commissioner, the previous Commissioner and to the Panel. Members were grateful and wished him the very best in his new appointment.

Mr Nolan thanked the Chairman, and said that he had enjoyed the previous 4 years and he was moving to a national role with CIPFA. Mr Nolan felt that finance had always been taken seriously by the Panel and wished the Panel every success for the future.