

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 Thursday, 2 February 2017.

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

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 M Campbell (Policy Officer) and Mr J Cook (Scrutiny Research Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

209. Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel held on 15 November 2016 *(Item 4)*

1. In response to a question, the Commissioner explained that consideration of extending the Emergency Services Network for communications was still underway and that a further update could be provided later in 2017.
2. The Commissioner explained that an update from Compass House on hard to reach or isolated groups would be provided.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2016 were an accurate record and that they be signed by the Chairman and that the Commissioner provide an update on victim service contact with hard to reach and isolated groups.

210. Meeting dates 2017/18 *(Item 5)*

RESOLVED that the dates of meetings for 2017 be noted.

211. Draft Safer in Kent Plan 2017-2021 & Precept Proposal paper *(Item B1)*

Police and Crime Plan

1. The Panel were provided with the Commissioner's draft Safer in Kent: The Community Safety and Justice Plan 2017-21 and budget, together with a report explaining the main themes of the draft Plan. The Panel noted that, although the draft Plan fulfilled the statutory requirement to publish a Police and Crime Plan, the Commissioner had chosen to call the document the Safer in Kent: The

Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan. The Commissioner presented a report and Appendices which set out the draft Plan and the results of the Commissioner's consultation on the draft Plan, proposed a precept and confirmed that the draft Plan took account of the Strategic Policing Requirement and of the views of other stakeholders. The report and Appendices also set out the Commissioner's reasons for an increase in the precept of 3.3% and provided information about the medium term financial picture and use of reserves. The Commissioner's report included a commentary by the Commissioner's Chief Finance Officer.

2. The Panel noted that the Commissioner had consulted widely in preparing the draft Plan and budget. The Panel noted that the priorities in the draft Plan included most of the topics mentioned as priorities in consultation. The Panel pointed out to the Commissioner that mental health had not featured strongly in the priorities identified in consultation but noted the Commissioner's explanation that he considered this to be very important and that he wished to show leadership by including it in his priorities. The Panel noted that most of those consulted had been supportive of the proposal to increase the precept.
3. The Panel noted that the Commissioner wished to emphasise the extended role of Commissioners in criminal justice and the links to community safety and for those reasons had decided on a broader title for the Plan.
4. The Panel were pleased to note the extent of the Commissioner's consultation and were supportive of the more strategic approach he had taken to the content of the plan, with emphasis on his personal responsibilities.
5. The Panel sought clarification of the Commissioner's intentions in respect of funding for Community Safety Partnerships and CCTV and noted that the Commissioner hoped to maintain grants to Community Safety Partnerships in future years but was unable to guarantee this if his own funding was reduced. The Panel noted the Commissioner's view that other funding, for example through the Mental Health and Policing Fund he had set up, might be available for suitable projects by Community Safety Partnerships. The Panel noted the Commissioner's view that CCTV funding was not a police responsibility.
6. The Panel noted that the Police and Crime Act gave the Commissioner new responsibilities in a number of areas, including complaints against the police and noted that the Commissioner was considering the options and would bring a report to the Panel later in the year.
7. The Panel sought clarification of the references to getting "the right support from the right person" in mental health cases and noted the Commissioner's intention to engage further with social services, Clinical Commissioning Groups and the Kent and Medway Health Partnership to encourage them to become more actively involved.
8. The Panel noted that the draft Plan referred to the actions the Commissioner would take to support the plan. The Panel felt that it should be made clear that the Commissioner owned the plan and was not therefore just supporting its delivery. **The Panel recommended that the Commissioner revise the wording to clarify his ownership and responsibility for delivering the Plan.**

9. Panel members commented on key issues relating to local policing, including the need for visible policing to be continued and that more work could be done to address anti-social driving and speeding. Members also commented on the need to address modern day slavery and vulnerable children. The Commissioner noted the issues raised by Panel members and assured them that the Chief Constable would be required to address a range of such issues by producing details of how he would deliver the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan.
10. The Panel were supportive of the draft Plan and noted that the Commissioner was willing to present progress reports at future meetings.

RESOLVED that the Panel support the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan and that authority be delegated to Panel Officers to prepare and publish a report on the Plan in consultation with the Panel Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

Proposed precept

1. The Commissioner explained that he sought approval for an increase in the police precept of 3.3%, (equivalent to £5 per week for a Band D household) The Panel noted the Commissioner's comment that the police precept in Kent would still be amongst the lowest, which was why a larger increase than 2% had been permitted by Government without the need for a referendum. The Commissioner explained that Government decisions on grant were based on the assumption that the precept would be raised by the maximum permitted amount.
2. The Panel noted that the budget would provide for an establishment of 3260 officers (an increase of 80) and also for an increase in the PCSO establishment from 280 to 304 and that this would have a positive impact on visible policing. The Panel also noted that the Chief Constable intended to give additional powers to PCSO's.
3. The Panel expressed concern about the proposal to use £5.1m from reserves to smooth out the savings requirement for the Force but were assured by the Commissioner that any underspend would be used to replenish those reserves.
4. The Panel also sought and received an assurance that both the auditors and the Chief Finance Officer were content with the plan to reduce reserves from £65m to around £20m by 2021/22.

RESOLVED that the Panel unanimously support the proposed precept increase of 3.3% for 2017/18. The Panel also formally noted the excellent work of the Commissioner's staff in delivering the consultation work and Police and Crime Plan.

B2 - Questions to the Commissioner

1. *I understand that the Essex PCC wishes to take on the oversight of the Fire Service in Essex. You have said that you do not intend to take the same approach. How will this difference affect collaboration between Kent and Essex Police?*
(Mr Mike Hill)

The Commissioner explained that the difference approaches to PCC involvement in overseeing Fires Services in Kent and Essex would not damage or disrupt existing collaboration agreements. Work was already planned to improve and increase collaboration between the forces, including consideration of extending collaboration and joint working to more forces in the Eastern Region (joint Force car procurement being a good example already in place).

2. *We are very aware that Kent Police have to make on – going savings and that the largest financial commitment for the Police is employees. We also see that Kent Police continue to recruit and only recently 54 police officers attended their “Passing Out” ceremony. In Kent there are diverse communities and we need to ensure that the Kent Police workforce reflects this. I would like to know what the breakdown of the protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010) of the new recruits is and what steps the Commissioner is taking to ensure the Chief Constable has a diverse workforce to reflect the Kent communities. The media coverage of the “Passing out” parade I saw showed a picture of five white males – two new police constables, the Commissioner, the Chief Constable and the Chair of the Police and Crime Panel. I also would like to know what action the Commissioner is taking to ensure that there is awareness of the reasons for staff and officers leaving and appropriate action taken and that there is resilience in Kent Police – for instance ensuring knowledge/experience transfer and “organisational memory” from those leaving the force to those staying or joining.*
(Mrs Elaine Bolton)

The Commissioner explained that he and the Chief Constable both agreed that continued positive action was necessary to encourage more people from minority communities to apply to join the Police Service and that this would help Kent Police reflect the diverse community it serves. The Commissioner explained that in 2016/17 new joiners included 4.42% with a BME background and 3.98% stating a disability. The Commissioner also highlighted that many people from a range of communities have enquired about joining the Force at many recent recruitment events. The Commissioner explained that recruitment and developing and maintaining a representative workforce would be an important aspect of his discussions with the Chief Constable at their performance meetings. To support this work, a monthly HR report was provided to him and the Chief Constable. He advised the Panel that work was underway on retention of officers and succession planning to ensure expertise was not lost when officers retired or moved into different roles. **The Commissioner agreed to provide a more detailed breakdown of recruitment across the protected characteristics to the Panel Member.**

Regarding the issue of the photograph referenced in the question, the Commissioner explained that it had been taken as part of a local focus approach whereby MPs in Kent were invited to meet new officers due to be posted to their areas.

3. *Congratulations to the Commissioner on the launch of his Police Cadet Scheme. Do you have a breakdown of the diversity of the recruits to date not only in terms of ethnicity and gender but also with regards to how many are NEETS and they type of school the young people attend.*

(Mr Gurvinder Sandher)

The Commissioner explained that of the 132 Cadets so far, 11 were from BME backgrounds and 41% of cadets were female. He explained that no cadets were NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) but that they came from a range of education backgrounds, including 56 of the 130 that fell into vulnerable groups. Work was underway to identify NEET young people that would be suitable for the programme.

RESOLVED that the Panel thank the Commissioner for answering the questions.

212. Commissioner's Decisions 011-012

(Item C1)

RESOLVED that the Panel note the Commissioner's decisions.

213. Proposed National Association of Police and Crime Panels

(Item D1)

1. Panel members discussed the benefits of establishing a national association of Police and Crime Panels, recognising that it may offer an opportunity for greater lobbying power and information sharing. However, members highlighted that existing links established via the regional Panel networks had proved useful and had the benefit of being more focused and productive, with concerns raised that a national association may lack direction and prevent consideration of more local factors. Cllr Sloan and Mr Sandher both commented on the positive work they had observed at the regional network events and were supportive of maintaining Kent's commitment to this joint working.

RESOLVED that the Panel should not support the establishment of a national association but would explore other options to support improved joint working with other Panels.

214. Panel Report

(Item D2)

RESOLVED that the Panel approves its annual report for 2016.

215. Future work programme

(Item D3)

RESOLVED that the Panel note the work programme.

216. Minutes of the Commissioner's Governance Board meeting held on 7 November 2016

(Item E1)

RESOLVED that the Panel note the minutes of the Governance Board meeting held on 7 November 2016.