

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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### 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 Thursday, 8 February 2018.

PRESENT: Mr P M Hill, OBE (Chairman), Mr Gurvinder Sandher (Vice-Chairman), Cllr B Bradford, Mr N J D Chard, Cllr M Dearden, Cllr F Gooch, Cllr R Hogarth (Substitute for Cllr P Fleming), Cllr MJ Holloway, Cllr A Horton, Cllr J Knight, Cllr B Luker, Cllr T Shonk, Cllr Sloan, Cllr P Todd, Cllr M Eddy, Cllr H Tejan, Cllr J Burden and Mrs E Bolton

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

##### **254. Membership**

*(Item 3)*

1. The Chairman advised the Panel that Cllr Holloway had replaced Cllr Morris on the Panel.

RESOLVED that the Membership change be noted.

##### **255. Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel held on 15 November 2017**

*(Item 5)*

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 November were an accurate record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

#### **Matters Arising**

##### **PCC general updates**

1. The Commissioner updated the Panel on some issues raised with him at and since the previous Panel meeting.
  - Regarding PCSOs issuing penalty notices for parking in restricted areas outside of schools; a draft Memorandum Of Understanding had been sent to parking leads for all councils, which set out the governance and local arrangements. Kent Police were working with Medway Council regarding PCSOs issuing penalty notices and that a Medway pilot would be considered in due course.

- Magnate Generation was running a project from the Bower House café in Ashford which involved working with pupils from local schools by providing business courses outside of school hours.
- It was likely that the Emergency Services Network (ESN) would be extended to cover KCC Community Wardens when all public sector services currently using the Airwaves digital communication system transitioned to ESN.

### **Additional item – Recorded Crime increase in Kent (Verbal Update)**

1. The Commissioner provided an update to the Panel on the recently published national crime data which showed an increase in recorded crime in Kent. He advised the Panel that the statistics were difficult to assess fairly given the changes in recording practice and national guidance year on year. The Commissioner clarified that the Crime Survey for England and Wales showed that overall crime in the UK was down by 40% since 2014, however he noted that the recently released crime stats indicated that there had been an increase in 2017 of 27%. He highlighted that further work had been undertaken to improve crime recording following the review of recording accuracy which would probably have contributed to an increase in the recorded figures. The Commissioner also commented that legislation and process changes as well as positive publicity campaigns had encouraged more people to come forward to report certain 'hidden harm' crime types, such as stalking and domestic abuse, sexual assault and rape. This reflected increased victim confidence rather than a real-world increase in the number of crimes being committed. However, the Commissioner acknowledged that part of the overall increase did evidence straightforward increases in crime. He advised the Panel that this was part of a national trend but that Kent Police was looking into the matter, focusing more on the impact of any increases rather than the stats themselves.
2. The Commissioner highlighted that Anti-social behaviour incident reports for Kent had fallen by 11%. This showed a mixed picture around reporting of issues by the public. He also noted that the new Policing Model that had been introduced in 2017, as well as the new Investigation tool, had freed up officer time, which was positive and was expected to improve services over time.
3. The Commissioner answered Member questions, explaining that the crime types that had seen a genuine increase (rather than suspected reporting increase) were public order, violence against the person (VAP) as well as knife and weapon offences. The Commissioner acknowledged points made by the Panel regarding expected increases in reports relating to domestic abuse, harassment and sexual offences and that it was important to retain a strong focus on understanding and tackling any increases in real crime. The Commissioner highlighted the commitment to recruit more Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) to support victims and that a new co-ordinator role for sexual offences was expected to help further.
4. The Commissioner confirmed that work was continuing on monitoring the data integrity following the HMIC inspection and that he was holding the Chief Constable to account on this issue. The Chief Constable was now required to provide regular updates on data integrity at Performance and Delivery Boards. Also, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services

had provided extra training to the Force's own auditors to ensure alignment in approach. The Commissioner accepted that the 27% increase in recorded crime appeared to be a cause for concern but reassured the Panel that he was holding the Chief Constable to account on data accuracy and integrity and was more intent on ensuring all crimes were recorded properly so they could be dealt with, even if that resulted in an increase in the figures. He advised the Panel that recording accuracy had risen to 90% and that he was satisfied that the Chief Constable was taking appropriate steps to continue this improvement. **The Commissioner confirmed that he would provide a report to the Panel on crime data integrity once the follow-up report from HMICFRS's next inspection became available.**

5. Responding to Member questions, the Commissioner advised that investigations had shown that there was no link between pressure on the 101 service and the drop in ASB reports. The Commissioner also highlighted the introduction of online reporting as a method of accessing policing services which had provided a good alternative which it was hoped would ease pressure on the 101 service. He also advised the Panel that he had increased Community Safety Partnership funding from the PCC budget by 10%, which he hoped would enable them to consider and develop innovative methods of tackling ASB and linked issues. The Commissioner reassured the Panel that he would be supporting continued development of technology, that the launch of the online reporting tool was a step in the right direction, though he cautioned that Social Media was not an appropriate platform for reporting crime.

RESOLVED that the Panel thank the Commissioner for the verbal updates and that they be noted.

## **256. Draft refreshed 'Safer in Kent: The Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan' and precept proposal for 2018/19**

*(Item B1)*

1. The Commissioner introduced the updated Safer in Kent: Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan, noting that the Chairman had said that the Panel would consider the Plan and the Precept separately to allow reasonable scrutiny and discussion.
2. The Commissioner advised the Panel that the Plan had been updated and refreshed to reflect the changing needs of the residents, confirming that he would use these resident focused priorities to hold the Chief Constable to account for delivering the service required by the people of Kent. The Commissioner provided information on the consultation activity and the results, which had been used to develop the updated plan. He commented that the main priorities, as identified by residents had not changed overall; Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), sexual offences, terrorism and radicalisation, burglary, knife crime, domestic abuse, gang-related crime. The Commissioner noted that terrorism had become more important to some residents, most likely as result of the various incidents over the previous twelve months.

3. The Commissioner explained that the consultation had attracted just under 1700 responses, which was a good level to inform his updated plan. He advised that the consultation had not been digitally exclusive, with the online questionnaire supported by face to face engagements and events as well as hardcopy literature provided at a range of venues. The Commissioner commented that he had made particular effort to engage with diverse and minority communities via attendance at community venues such as mosques and Gurdwaras. He commented that it was important to him to ensure his plan captured views from all communities in Kent.
4. The Commissioner explained that the consultation had asked about the current Kent Police Ride-along scheme and alternative methods of holding the Chief Constable to account. As there had been mixed responses to these questions, further work would be done to review options. In terms of collaboration with other emergency services, there was significant support for continued joint work but the Commissioner gave reassurances that the positive responses would not be used to justify significant changes or reductions in estates via co-location without further review and engagement. The Commissioner noted that it was positive that people wanted to see more collaboration between emergency services and he commented on the good work already underway with Kent Fire and Rescue Service and progress being made with the Ambulance Service. The Commissioner highlighted that fewer respondents had answered the demographic questions which made it difficult to assess how representative the views were but he reiterated the positive engagement work undertaken directly with minority communities to ensure their views were captured in some way.
5. In terms of key changes or updates to the Plan, the Commissioner explained that visible neighbourhood policing and effective roads policing had been amended to be more mindful of the need to protect vulnerable road users (e.g. cyclists and pedestrians) and also include greater emphasis on the work around supporting bereaved families following fatal road traffic collisions. The Commissioner also highlighted that the planned recruitment of up to 200 additional police officers would enhance the frontline and that the Chief Constable had committed to deploying a significant amount of the additional resource to support local policing. He also advised the Panel that the previous recruitment of 80 additional officers since he became Commissioner, combined with the recently deployed new investigation tool, as well as the maintenance of PCSO numbers at 300 had supported the commitment to neighbourhood policing. The Commissioner advised that the Panel that this was further bolstered by planned work around Community Policing volunteers and the Commissioner's cadet scheme.
6. The Commissioner summarised the update, noting that there were few substantive amendments, that the consultation response had supported the view that the public's priorities had not significantly changed and that the amendments that had been made reflected a desire to be more explicit about much of the good work that was already being done by Kent Police, supported by the Commissioner in holding the Chief Constable to account for continuing to deliver a good service in line with the agreed priorities.
7. Members commented that they were pleased by the high response to the consultation and how the feedback had been incorporated into the plan.

8. Responding to questions, the Commissioner clarified that roads policing involved denying use of the county's road network to those intent on causing harm through criminality. He highlighted the positive roads policing successes such as the disruption of drug and weapons transport through the county and that he was keen to see greater use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) to support further improvements.
9. The Commissioner advised the Panel, in response to a question, that Kent had the most video-enabled criminal justice system, with all crown courts having access to video-links for remote hearings and that work was ongoing to improve the processes for magistrate courts.
10. Responding to questions, the Commissioner advised the Panel that the addition of requiring Kent Police to deliver an 'accessible' service referred to planned improvements to 101 call-handling as well as the development and implementation of an online reporting system. He explained that an awareness campaign was in development to ensure the public understood all the methods for contacting the police and which would be most appropriate in different circumstances. Members commented on equivalent work being undertaken in the Health Service and highlighted the need for effective communication and consistency. Members and the Commissioner discussed the use of Police Front Counters, noting the need for a consistent and well communicated explanation of how and when these could be accessed and what support would be available.
11. The Commissioner noted comments from the Panel regarding the potential need to highlight Child Sexual Exploitation more explicitly within the Plan priorities, in recognition of its continued position as the highest priority as reported via the Commissioner's public consultations. The Commissioner reassured the Panel that the tackling exploitation, harassment and violence priority did reflect that he and Kent Police took the matter very seriously.
12. The Commissioner reassured the Panel that where some crime types, such as Public Order, were not highlighted as key priorities for the public, he and Kent Police expected continued diligence around policing these issues. He advised that there were several crime types and elements of police work which may not be as visible and well understood by the wider public but that were very important for operational policing, protecting people from harm and reducing crime. Consequently, these would continue to be key areas of work for Kent Police.
13. Addressing Panel comments regarding equality issues, the Commissioner confirmed that he would be holding the Chief Constable to account in terms of delivering good progress regarding the promotion of wellbeing and tackling inequality within the Leadership priority. He also noted comments in relation to low levels of response to the consultation from BME respondents, reiterating the engagement work he had done with relevant communities to capture views from Kent's diverse communities. The Commissioner thanked Panel Members for offers of support in engaging with diverse communities in the future.
14. The Commissioner noted comments from the Panel, that while they supported the clear commitment to caring for victims, they thought the Plan on a Page would benefit from being more explicit regarding a commitment to deliver similar levels of support to witnesses of crime.

15. The Commissioner reassured the Panel that in addition to communication activity planned to help the public understand how to best contact the police, the recruitment of additional civilian staff would help improve call handling at the Force Control Room. He added that it was very important the public reported all crime and ASB, so that the Police could record it effectively and work towards meeting the real demand for services.
16. Responding to questions, the Commissioner explained that while he was keen to do more work around prevention of crime and reducing reoffending, Police and Crime Commissioners had yet to be given the relevant authority around the wider Criminal Justice System. However, he reassured the Panel that work was taking place to improve diversionary schemes and improved custody protocols to limit unnecessary criminalisation and take into account people's wider needs and factors that may have led to potential criminal behaviour, such as being victims of domestic abuse, substance and alcohol misuse and homelessness. He highlighted plans regarding a new scheme for veterans as a good example, noting the positive work being done by the SSAFA Armed Forces charity.
17. The Panel thanked the Commissioner for explaining the updated Plan and for answering its questions.

RESOLVED that the Panel note the updated Safer in Kent: Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan and recommends that:

- the Plan wording be amended at Section 5 to make clearer what is meant by "denying use of the county's road network to those intent on causing harm through criminality";
  - that child sexual exploitation be mentioned more explicitly within the Plan priorities: and
  - that there is a specific reference to support for witnesses in the "Plan on a Page".
18. The Commissioner outlined the proposed Precept increase, particularly in terms of how it would fund the various improvements included within the Plan. He advised the Panel that there were still significant challenges facing Policing across the UK, notably the increase in demand, expectations to deal with issues outside criminality as well as the increase in types of crime being identified. The Commissioner commented that several forces have reported that only 1 in 5 issues dealt with by police relate to crime. The Commissioner paid tribute the excellent work of all Kent Police Officers and staff in continuing to deliver a good service to the people of Kent, particularly in the face of such challenges.
  19. The Commissioner explained that the budget settlement for Policing had been more positive than expected, noting that the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners had been successful in lobbying the government for better funding to meet the increasing demand for and complexity of policing. He advised that the national settlement included £450m for the next year and the same again the year after. He clarified that this figure includes £50m for counter-terrorism, £130m for

additional pressures and significant operations and that the remainder would be funded through flexibility to raise additional funds through policing precept. To allow this additional levy, the referendum cap had been raised from 1.99% to 7.6%, which equated to an extra £1 per month (£12 per annum) for a typical Band D house in Kent, amounting to a total £9.5m extra collected via the precept increase.

20. The Commissioner advised the Panel that despite the opportunity to collect additional funds to support improvements, he would continue to require the Chief Constable to identify and deliver efficiency savings and further streamline the force, to ensure that all the money was spent as efficiently and effectively as possible. Kent Police was still expected to save another £9m in 2018/19. The Commissioner reassured the Panel that the Chief's planned savings had minimum impact on the front line as they focused on efficiencies with procurement, overtime arrangements and collaboration. However, he cautioned that savings would be more and more difficult to find each year, without having a negative impact on delivering front line services. The Commissioner also advised the Panel that he had taken the £200k underspend within his Office as a saving, representing a 13% reduction in the cost of his Office.
21. The Commissioner advised the Panel the additional money from the precept, combined with the Force savings, the saving from his Office and money from reserves, if required, would fund the recruitment of up to an additional 200 police officers and 84 civilians. He advised that this would be the largest Kent Police recruitment drive for a generation and that it would take time to progress but he was confident that using the funds to recruit additional officers and staff was the right thing to do. The Commissioner reassured the Panel that PCSO numbers would be monitored and further recruitment be considered as it was expected that many PCSOs would apply for the Police Officer roles.
22. The Commissioner reassured the Panel that the consultation had shown considerable support for an increase in the policing precept, providing that it resulted in positive work by Kent Police. He expected that the additional officers would reassure the public and offer good value for the extra money being levied. **The Commissioner offered to report back to the Panel at a future meeting on progress with the recruitment, providing that the proposed precept was agreed.**
23. Members commented on the proposed precept, noting the Commissioner's positive plans to use the additional money to recruit additional officers and staff.
24. Responding to questions regarding the budget and use of reserves, the Commissioner and his Chief Finance Officer explained that the National Audit Office had advised that a minimum of 5% of revenue budget be maintained in reserves and that all plans kept in mind the need to ensure use of reserves was sustainable. The Commissioner commented that since 2011, many Forces had maintained, in his opinion, higher reserve funds than was necessary and he felt it was important to put that money to better use.
25. In terms of ensuring good value for money and appropriate use of the additional resources, the Commissioner advised the Panel that he had received assurances from the Chief Constable that the additional Officers and Staff would be focussed on local policing and 'high harm' crime, such as exploitation and abuse issues.

The Commissioner commented that he believed the proposed deployment arrangements struck a good balance across key policing areas, including hidden harm, high harm, local policing and roads policing. The Commissioner clarified that while he recognised the value of PCSOs, he was confident that focusing on Police Officer recruitment was the most appropriate use of the funds. The Commissioner explained that the precept increase and the relevant spending plans, if agreed, would be communicated to the public in a variety of forums and using online communications.

26. Responding to questions about the reserve levels, the Commissioner and his Chief Finance Officer reiterated that the planned use of reserves was in line with National Audit Office guidance and that they believed it was appropriate to reduce the level of reserves held due to the need to invest now to deliver a more efficient service in the long run. The Commissioner reassured the Panel that sufficient reserves would be maintained and that capital underspends would be moved to reserves when appropriate. Members noted the Commissioner's explanation, though concern about eventual reserve levels by 2020 was expressed by some Members, with a view that this posed a risk to effective contingency planning and preparation for fluctuations in available funding.
27. Regarding collection of council tax and precept levy, the Commissioner explained that the Kent Police budget did include support for this work with local councils and that this spread the benefit of increased tax collection across all relevant authorities.
28. Responding to questions about retention and recruitment of staff, the Commissioner advised the Panel that he appreciated the challenge involved in the recruitment drive and assured the Panel that consideration was being given to ensuring new officers would be retained. He also clarified that there would be further PCSO recruitment to maintain the staffing level at 300, including filling some existing vacancies and the likely movement of some PCSO's to become police officers. The Commissioner explained that the Police structure included 210 PCSOs embedded in communities with the other 90 working in specialist roles such as co-ordinating missing person enquiries, supporting Domestic Abuse investigations and wider community safety activities.
29. Responding to a question regarding the impact of large scale operations, such as Operation Stack, and particularly the potential for significant disruption as a result of Brexit, the Commissioner explained that a Special Policing Grant may be applied for from the Home Office where costs of supporting exceptional operations exceeded 1% of the local Police budget. The Commissioner also reassured the Panel that work was ongoing in terms of reviewing civil contingency plans with partner agencies.

RESOLVED that the Proposed Precept be approved unanimously.

## **257. Mental Health Update**

*(Item C1)*

1. The Commissioner advised the Panel that dealing with mental health issues continued to represent a significant part of non-crime related work undertaken by



Kent Police and reasserted his view that this should not be case. He noted that some Chief Constables had expressed concerns that only 17% of police time was spent dealing with criminal offences and that mental health was a significant contributor to this issue. The Commissioner emphasised that it was important that other agencies with formal responsibility and appropriate training play a greater role in dealing with mental health issues and meet their obligations.

2. The Commissioner explained that the Mental Health and Policing Oversight Board had held its third meeting on 1 February 2018. He explained that this Board involved the ACC, the CCG and Mental Health Trust and now the Ambulance Service and the Commissioner. The Board had considered Kent Police's Mental Health and Policing Strategy and was seeking to identify improvements. The Commissioner advised that the recent discussions had included updates on the Street Triage programme, including plans for further evaluation of the scheme to assess whether it should be rolled out across Kent.
3. The Commissioner advised the Panel that additional work was being done to address issues relating to repeat callers to the Police who experience significant mental health problems, noting that 17 callers were responsible for 4% of all calls to Kent Police. He commented that managing this required sensitivity and understanding of the needs of the people in question.
4. The Commissioner also commented on the good work being undertaken to map wider issues and services relating to mental health across the county including crisis management and as well as general health and wellbeing, praising the excellent contribution from Kent County Council and Medway Council.
5. The Commissioner updated the Panel regarding the changes to custody arrangements for people sectioned under the Mental Health Act following the implementation of the Policing and Crime Act 2017. This meant that under-18s could not be detained in police custody under mental health legislation at all and that the circumstances for detaining adults had been restricted. The Commissioner was pleased to advise the Panel that the numbers of people detained by Police under s.136 of the Mental Health Act had fallen and he also noted that the care pathway improvements had reduced the handover periods between relevant agencies from hours to less than forty-five minutes. The Commissioner also advised the Panel that he would be organising another Mental Health Conference, which would involve service users, stakeholders and other partners.
6. The Commissioner updated the Panel on changes to the Mental Health Act which meant that s.136 powers could be exercised in any place other than a private dwelling. This meant that people could be sectioned while in a Police station which made it easier for the Police to ensure people got the support and help they required without being unnecessarily criminalised. The maximum detention period had been reduced from 72 hours to 24 and it was now mandatory for the police to consult a health professional before using s.136 powers to detain someone. The Commissioner commented that Kent Police had already been ensuring consultation with health professionals was undertaken prior to any s.136 power usage but that it was positive that this had been made a consistent requirement. He noted that this had meant that Officers were now having to spend more time at

A&E to achieve this but that he was happy that this was necessary to ensure people were supported appropriately.

7. The Commissioner advised the Panel of recent activity around mental health linked to Mental Health East with DCC Alan Baldwin of Cambridgeshire Police via a conference featuring all seven Eastern Region Police Forces, Zoe Billingham of HMICFRS, Mark Collins (National Policing Mental Health Lead and Professor Tim Kendall (National Clinical Director for Mental Health). Since the conference, the NHS had advised that more money was put aside for mental health but that this was not being channelled correctly yet by the CCGs but that national investment standards for mental health had since been implemented which would be applied to all CCGs. The Commissioner advised the panel that further discussions were taking place with the health sector regarding mental health in policing on a regular basis.
8. The Commissioner praised KFRS for its recent achievement of winning the Kent Dementia Friendly award, narrowly beating Kent Police to the trophy.

RESOLVED that the Commissioner's update be noted.

#### **258. Panel Annual Report**

*(Item D1)*

1. The Chairman introduced the Panel's annual report, commenting that he was pleased with the Panel's progress. He expressed congratulations to the Commissioner on his work and the low number of complaints received from the public. The Chairman also commented on the good working arrangements between Panel staff, the Commissioner and his Office.
2. The Chairman advised the Panel that progress was being made on working jointly with other Panels via the LGA Special Interest Group being developed, in line with the Panel's previous agreement not to support the creation of a national association but to explore more informal methods of sharing good practice.

RESOLVED that the report be approved.

#### **259. Future work programme**

*(Item D2)*

RESOLVED that the work plan be noted.

#### **260. Questions to the Commissioner**

*(Item )*

Question 1:

As Commissioner how do you monitor police use of Tasers and ensure that relevant policy is followed and reviewed? How, in holding the Chief Constable to account, do you decide whether proportionate action has been taken in their use in particular instances? (Don Sloan)

1. The Commissioner said he recognised the importance of the Police ensuring appropriate use of force as it was closely related to the principle of Policing by Consent. Responding to the question, the Commissioner provided the Panel with an overview of Taser use by Kent Police:
  - Home Office published data for calendar year 2016 showed that in Kent, Taser was:
    - Drawn/Aimed/Arched/Red dotted on 270 occasions
    - Discharged (drive stun or fired) on 37 occasions
  - At the Performance & Delivery Board on 27 September 2017, the Commissioner received a further update on use of force, including Taser.
  - Data showed that in the period April to June, Taser was:
    - Drawn/Aimed/Arched/Red dotted on 71 occasions
    - Discharged (drive stun or fired) on 13 occasions
  - On an annual basis, the Chief Constable is required to provide an update on Use of Force (including Taser) to the Performance & Delivery Board.
  - On a monthly basis, the Commissioner's office randomly reviews complaints against Kent Police – the use of Taser by Kent Police officers has not been identified as a specific issue.
  - Whenever an officer draws their Taser, they are required to complete a Use of Force form which is signed by their supervisor, and subsequently submitted to the Staff Safety Training Unit for review – this team delivers officer safety training and monitors use and effectiveness of tactics.
  - From 1 October 2016 it became mandatory for all UK police forces to accurately and consistently record use of force. From 1 April 2017, all forces are required to submit data to Home Office.
  - On 31 July 2017, Use of Force information was published on the Kent Police website to provide greater transparency and accessibility to data.
2. The Commissioner clarified that in terms of determining the proportionality of Taser deployment, this was an operational issue and would be based on the particular circumstances in each instance. A process was in place, requiring Officers to justify their use of Taser whenever it was deployed, which was managed internally by Kent Police. The Commissioner confirmed that as the decision to use Taser had to be based on Officer discretion in each set of circumstances, it was not for him to comment. However, he reassured the Panel that his office regularly dip-checks police complaints and that Taser use had not been flagged as an issue. The Commissioner also explained that he requested that historic data on Taser use, pre-dating the requirement to submit these figures to the Home Office, be published in the interest of transparency and accountability. The Commissioner commented that he had no particular concerns regarding Taser use as it was just one of a number of necessary tools Officers had at their disposal for resolving challenging situations and that he thought it was important for there to be a number of non-lethal options to minimise the risk of having to deploy lethal force.

Question 2:

Can the Commissioner provide an update on how he has been holding the Chief Constable to account in relation to delivering the Kent Police priority 'Combat

organised crime and gangs', particularly regarding work to limit the spread of drugs into Kent from London? (Malcolm Dearden)

3. The Commissioner advised the Panel that tackling organised crime and the associated drug activities were key priorities for him and Kent Police and that they featured as part of a standing item at every Performance & Delivery Board meeting. He explained that at the December board meeting, updates had been provided regarding ongoing work by Kent Police and partners to disrupt gang related criminality and to map out gang routes into and around Kent.
4. The Commissioner explained that tackling organised crime was a key part of Kent Police's Control Strategy and that there had been several successful police operations, the details of which had been made public such as operations which focused on drug dealing across the border between Kent and London involving Kent Police working with the Metropolitan Police and British Transport Police as well as Op Raptor, which had been set up following the murder of Kyle Yule in Medway and focused on preventing and disrupting serious and violent crime. He also outlined Op Marley which involved joint work with the Met tackling Moped linked cross-border gang crime. The Commissioner commented that a key part of all this work was engaging and working in partnership with other important agencies such as neighbouring Forces and the National Crime Agency (NCA).
5. The Commissioner confirmed that Kent Police were always looking for ways to enhance their capacity to tackle serious crime and that he expected ongoing partnership work with the Met and other partners around Operation Raptor to continue to deliver good results. He also commented that he expected the uplift in Police Officer numbers to contribute to further good work in this area.

RESOLVED that the Panel note the Commissioners answers.