

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, 24 September 2019.

PRESENT: Mr P M Hill, OBE (Chairman), Mr Gurvinder Sandher (Vice-Chairman), Cllr A Clark, Cllr L Dyball (Substitute) (Substitute for Cllr P Fleming), Mrs L Game, Cllr J Gideon, Cllr F Gooch, Ms S Hamilton, Cllr Mrs J Hollingsbee, Cllr S Mochrie-Cox, Cllr R Palmer, Cllr M Rhodes, Cllr R Wells and Mrs E Bolton

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs A Taylor (Scrutiny Research Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

325. Membership

(Item 2)

1. The Chairman advised the Committee that Cllr Clark, Cllr Palmer and Cllr Currie had been appointed to the Panel and welcomed them.

RESOLVED that the Membership changes be noted.

326. Declarations of Interests by Members in Items on the Agenda for this Meeting

(Item 4)

1. Cllr Mochrie-Cox declared an interest as an employee of Kent County Council.

327. Minutes of the Police and Crime Panel held on 12 June 2019

(Item 5)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2019 were a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

1. In matters arising Cllr Clark referred to the additional officers being recruited and trained; the Commissioner confirmed that there had not been any slippage from the statements in the minutes. The new recruits were out in local policing teams, including response, and the Chief Constable had also expanded and created new teams which local communities were starting to see the benefits of, including the Chief Constable's Crime squad, the doubling in size of the rural policing team and an increase in the roads policing team. There had been a positive start but there was still work to be done. The Commissioner had been pleased with the Panel's support for the additional 180 officers.

2. Cllr Clark also referred to call handling and his concerns about the information provided on recorded messages which he considered to be inaccurate. The Commissioner confirmed that he would look into this and, if appropriate, ask that it be rectified.

328. Police Officer Recruitment - Update *(Item B1)*

1. The Commissioner explained that Kent was the highest recruiting police force anywhere in the country last year. It was now becoming clear the deployment was starting to deliver results for local communities. There was a desire to have a police force that was reflective of the communities it served. There was a large amount of effort going into engaging with all communities to highlight opportunities within policing.

2. In relation to the deployment of this year's recruits and their impact; once their initial training was completed officers would go out into local policing teams, responding to calls and engaging with victims of crime, but they also provided the Chief Constable with capacity to increase the size of teams and create new teams in order to address some of the challenges. Referencing the recruitment and training of additional Town Centre officers, the Commissioner advised their deployment was based on analysis of demand, including levels of crime and ASB.

3. The Commissioner referred to positive criminal justice outcomes, this was moving in the right direction with regards to community outcomes. Where officers were deployed was determined on the basis of need, they were still a limited resource. The increase in officers represented a substantial investment by the Kent Council Taxpayer alongside the savings made to maximise the amount of money going into front line policing. The Commissioner offered congratulations to Kent Police's recruitment team, they had done a tremendous job delivering 291 extra officers last year, and boosting the number of applications received. The Commissioner referred to the stated ambition for 20,000 more officers across UK, he assured Members that he would lobby hard for Kent to receive its fair share. There was uncertainty around when forces would know the finer detail, the Commissioner was aware that there would be a funding announcement soon and he would ensure that the Panel was made aware of the allocation.

4. Cllr Gideon commented that it was positive to hear that diversity statistics for Kent were ahead of the national benchmark. She asked whether the diversity agenda played a role in who goes where. The Commissioner confirmed that the force worked hard on encouraging people progression and this information was available publicly. The Commissioner confirmed that when a new team was created applications from all officers were invited and followed by an assessment to determine who would be best in each role. There was extensive support available to people looking for promotion and lateral transfers.

5. Cllr Clark congratulated the Commissioner on progress with regards to getting the numbers of police officers back to those of 2010. He raised a concern over whether there was a high turnover of officers and a large loss of experienced officers. He was also conscious that if the force was training a large number of officers there was a need for a large number of trainers. The PCC explained that the biggest source of officers leaving was retirement, but sometimes those officers were retained

as police staff. Officers were not being lost to other forces at the levels seen nationally, Kent was a net beneficiary of police officer transfer schemes.

6. Cllr Palmer asked what the BAME makeup was across Kent and how the figures set out at paragraph 8 compared across the country and against other areas of the public sector. The Commissioner explained that the most recent census figure for the BAME population in Kent was around 8% so although progress had been made further work was needed to ensure the force represented the people it served.

7. Ms Hamilton referred to retention during the probation period, and asked if who was leaving and why was monitored. The Commissioner confirmed that it was monitored, and of the 490 officers who joined last year only 23 had left during the first year, this was for various reasons including finances, childcare, change of circumstances; there was no one reason which stood out as a cause for concern.

8. Cllr Mochrie-Cox raised the £10million efficiency savings; extra police needed extra support, he asked whether officers were burdened because resources were not available to support them. He asked that a report on support systems sitting behind officers be brought to the Panel at a future meeting. The Commissioner confirmed that the information was publicly available in his Performance and Delivery Board papers, the Commissioner was a big supporter of police staff and he was happy to talk more to the Panel about support provided to police officers by police staff and how police staff were supported and developed.

9. The Vice-Chairman congratulated the Commissioner on the work being done around diversity, he asked how Kent Police was being held to account with regards to recruitment across the diverse range of BAME backgrounds. The Commissioner confirmed that he had requested some further information from Kent Police around the diversity of the workforce, including the Cadet programme and volunteering schemes. In response to a question about fraud the Commissioner stated that he felt the process for dealing with it in the UK was not working. A joint unit had been created with Essex Police to provide a better service around fraud and economic crime. This was a big issue that caused significant levels of harm.

10. Cllr Dyball asked what the average time for processing applications was, were there sufficient staff working on the applications and did many applicants drop out because of the timescale. The Commissioner explained that Kent Police had worked hard to reduce the processing time, which originally was taking around 8 months. The process was now taking on average 4 months, with some turned round more quickly; the main concern was around DBS checks and vetting but this was being monitored. It was not considered that many applicants were lost due to the timescale for processing applications but it was a flexible process.

11. Mrs Game expressed her support for the Police Cadet scheme, which was a golden opportunity to train young people to become good police officers. The Commissioner supported this and confirmed that some Police Cadets were now joining Kent Police, adding that it was not the sole purpose of the scheme, but was a benefit.

12. Cllr Mochrie-Cox asked if a future Panel meeting could hear from Police Cadets, providing an opportunity to showcase and celebrate their experiences.

13. In response to a question from Cllr Gooch the Commissioner confirmed that Kent was the biggest recruiting police force in the country, it was the best performing police force in the country, it was ambitious to continue growth and development. However, this wouldn't have happened if the Panel and Commissioner had not taken some difficult decisions. The Commissioner confirmed that he would continue to make the case for Kent and the South East.

14. Elaine Bolton congratulated the Commissioner on the improved delivery and diversity of the Force. With regards to deployment being based on need, Mrs Bolton asked whether the diversity of districts and officers was taken into account when deployment decisions were made. Mrs Bolton expressed her surprise at the lack of reference to serious violence, and that there were 19 extra officers in a team focussing on missing children and adults, did this mean that Kent Police had an issue around missing children and adults more than serious violence? The Commissioner explained that with regards to the need for local town centre officers, violent crime was one of the criteria, amongst others; once announced, he said he would ask that the criteria be made transparent to ensure communities understood the decisions. When deployed after initial training officers are asked for their location preference, but ultimately the decision rested with the chief constable. The Commissioner said he was not aware of any process that sought to match officers from diverse backgrounds with diverse communities, but said he would ask the question of the Chief Constable.

15. Regarding missing children and adults, policing generally had a big problem; National Crime Agency statistics showed that over 300,000 missing person reports per year were reported to local policing. The Chief Constable had created a Missing Child and Exploitation Team to address concerns about children going missing and exploitation by gangs, violent crime and Modern Day Slavery. He added that there had been a reduction in the number of children going missing and the length of time they were missing for. It was considered that this was a good model that could be replicated for missing adults.

16. The Chairman highlighted two points to take forward, firstly, the support structure and police staff to support the new officers, and secondly, how the Panel might celebrate the successes of the Police Cadet scheme.

RESOLVED that the Panel note the Commissioner's Police Officer Recruitment Update and:

- Request a report on the support structures that sit behind the new Officers
- Consider ways in which it might celebrate the successes of the Police Cadet scheme.

329. Victim Satisfaction & Community Engagement *(Item B2)*

1. The Commissioner explained that the measurement of victim satisfaction in Kent had been mixed but the Chief Constable was asked to report back on the key areas of Hate Crime, Rape and Domestic Abuse. It had been suggested that the survey be extended to include other crime types and the statistics were being presented at every Performance and Delivery Board to allow progress to be tracked.

2. The commissioned charity Victim Support also measured the level of victim satisfaction with the service provided.
3. In terms of community engagement, the force was asked to provide information about different types of community engagement, these areas were not always consistent, and the Commissioner highlighted Parish Council meetings as an example. The Commissioner met every 6 months with the district chairs of Kent Association of Local Councils. The Force was looking at ways in which it could engage with local communities, it was considered that social media was a mixed experience.
4. Elaine Bolton asked how the Commissioner held the Chief Constable to account on the key themes around dissatisfaction and how he ensured that these were addressed. The Commissioner confirmed that he had asked the Chief Constable about the reasons for people being dissatisfied and how the Force could learn from such comments. People were sometimes unhappy with the outcome of their case, the Force would continue to monitor this and it was considered that there was room for improvement. Victim satisfaction would be discussed at the Performance and Delivery Board on 25 September.
5. The Vice-Chairman asked about hate crime and whether it would be possible to look into satisfaction levels further, particularly individuals with English as a second language. In addition, regarding social media, a report had just been finalised following engagement with young people, looking at how Kent Police used social media, it was considered that twitter was used by professional classes, people on the street used Facebook and Instagram more regularly. The Commissioner confirmed that the longer-term hate crime satisfaction figures would be circulated to Panel Members. He agreed with the comments about social media and that it was essential to diversify when it came to using it effectively.
6. Mr Rhodes asked whether the Commissioner was content with the surveys being conducted over the telephone by staff within the Research Bureau and whether face to face was more appropriate? The Commissioner considered that this may be more beneficial, but there was a need to manage the volume of surveys against resources available.
7. Mr Palmer raised the issue of low-level crime, and he asked for an assurance that this was being taken seriously by the Chief Constable. The Commissioner confirmed that progress was being made in terms of increasing local policing teams and the crime squad. The Police prioritise demand based on threat, harm and risk, but the Chief Constable's message is to provide a quality service and put victims and witnesses at the heart of everything the force does.
8. Cllr Mochrie-Cox welcomed the move towards monitoring other crime types, he asked how the opinions of those young people under the age of 16 was being captured, whose experiences of the criminal justice system may be very different? The Commissioner confirmed that he did not want anyone to be disenfranchised on the basis of age or protected characteristics. He considered it vital to engage with young people affected by crime. The Commissioner's surveys did not discriminate on the basis of age and a piece of work was undertaken in February 2018 where schools were invited to circulate a survey to young people around their experiences of cybercrime and bullying and 6,500 responses were received from young people.

Kent Police also engaged with youth councils, and he issued caution around creating adverse experiences by not listening to the voices of young people around crime and the criminal justice system.

9. Cllr Clark asked how much reliance could be placed on the figures? The Commissioner explained that the figures could be a reflection of the level of service, the Force had dedicated police officers to work with families affected by some crimes such as rape, this may well reflect why 91.4% of victims were satisfied. The Crown Prosecution Service threshold around rape and sexual offences was very high and therefore there was a reduction in numbers going to court. Regarding shoplifting this was not considered to be a victimless crime. Kent Police did prosecute shoplifters but also aware that there was not always sufficient capability to do so, there was improving relationships between Kent Police and local businesses. It was hoped that where there were extra resources there would be a reduction in crime.

10. Cllr Gideon asked whether hate crime was a crime against anyone with a protected characteristic, she asked for a report back on hate crime with a greater breakdown, including the types of crime and if possible, information on vexatious victims. The Commissioner confirmed that he would report back to the Panel on these issues.

11. Mrs Bolton asked about burglary victims, if the Commissioner provided a further report on victim satisfaction it would be useful to have that survey included.

12. Cllr Hollingsbee referred to shop lifting, the Commissioner explained that the Force did engage with security staff and work was being done on reporting and communication lines.

RESOLVED that the Panel note the Commissioner's update on Victim Satisfaction and Community Engagement and in due course the Commissioner provides a further report that includes:

- (a) Hate crime, with a breakdown by crime type and if possible, information on vexatious victims;
- (b) Burglary victim satisfaction levels;
- (c) Benchmarking of victim satisfaction against statistical neighbours.

330. Violence Reduction - Update

(Item B3)

1. The Commissioner explained that this update was around work which had been taking place for a long time, it pre-dated the Government's Serious Violence Strategy to tackle gun crime, knife crime and homicide. Kent faced a number of challenges including proximity to London and the continent. The Violence Reduction Challenge was set up to take a look at how it was possible to work better together as partners to tackle violent crime. The Commissioner outlined some of the main points from his report to the Panel.

2. Cllr Palmer asked about the effect of a reduction in Youth Services, and how local councils could support the Commissioner and the Police. The Commissioner agreed that policing was not the only response to violent crime; it had to be a partnership of all agencies to prevent it happening in the first place. The

Commissioner referenced adverse childhood experiences, that children witnessing violence were more likely to become perpetrators of violence. Referring to stop and search the Commissioner explained that typically in around 17-18% something was found or an arrest took place, adding that they were conducted based on intelligence. The Chairman referred to the report of the Select Committee on knife crime which would set out areas on which the County Council could focus.

3. Ms Hamilton referred to young people and how they could be supported to prevent them being pulled back into gangs once they had been through the criminal justice system. She also raised the links with British Transport Police (BTP) and whether these were improving to prevent county line networks from travelling. The Commissioner confirmed that he would raise the points from Ms Hamilton about local police with the Chief Constable, BTP was a key partner in tackling crime and ASB. Joint operations were carried out and with regards to rural areas, there was a need for a consistent approach and he acknowledged that rural areas did feel more isolated. Regarding gangs, the Commissioner referred to a number of different projects and the importance of the partnership between the police and local authorities and the tremendous work of the prison service which was key.

4. Cllr Mochrie-Cox asked for an assurance that intelligence led referred to qualitative research led evidence. The Commissioner agreed with this point, he would not want policing to be statistic led, but he did wish to build a problem profile, informing about individuals and communities that the Force needed to work with, this included trauma informed work and it was hoped that the Violence Reduction Unit would take this work further.

5. The Vice-Chairman referred to the stop and search scrutiny panel, he considered it may be worth the Commissioner sitting down with the groups in the community doing the day to day activity, for example groups working with communities during black history month.

6. In response to a question from Cllr Clark the Commissioner confirmed that stop and search had not fallen, if anything it had increased. It was an important tool and there was a move to it being more intelligence led. There was a need to ensure that stop and search was being used to target criminal activity.

7. In response to a question from Elaine Bolton about future funding the Commissioner confirmed that he was committed to sharing data and outcomes, there had been a lot of lobbying to the Home Office to continue funding. There would be an announcement in December setting out the future funding for policing.

RESOLVED that the Panel note the Commissioners update on Violence Reduction, the Panel requested a further report in due course.

331. Mental Health - Verbal Update

(Item B4)

1. The Commissioner referenced the Performance and Delivery Board papers which showed a month on month increase in the number of people detained under the S136 Mental Health Act. Following a review of the County's Crisis Care Concordat arrangements the PCC now chaired the strategic decision-making body for Kent and Medway, with a number of partners represented. The board met on 10

July and the Terms of Reference were agreed. There was a discussion around repeat presenters and the boards developing an action plan. This was in addition to work being done in the Force Control Room around repeat presenters. The board was due to meet again in October.

2. In terms of National work, if an individual is detained under S136 they are more likely to be conveyed by the Police than the Health Service, this needed to change. The Commissioner represented PCCs on a national working group and joined up conversations were being had at a national and local level.

3. There was due to be a further update at the Performance and Delivery Board on 25 September 2019.

RESOLVED that the Panel note the Commissioner's update on Mental Health and request that this continue as a standing item on the agenda.

332. Questions to the Commissioner

(Item D2)

Q1: In light of the Commissioner's priority, within his Safer in Kent Plan, for the Chief Constable to provide visible neighbourhood policing can the Commissioner confirm what has been done to increase funding for Community Policing Teams? Could the Commissioner please include in his answer:

- *Whether a more visible Police presence can be obtained by using civilians to free up officer time?*
- *Whether there has been any analysis of the cost of employing additional civilian staff vs the increased time "on the beat"?*
- *Whether there is any analysis that shows that having staff out in the community is effective at reducing crime, or does it just give the public peace of mind?*

(Mark Rhodes)

1. The Commissioner explained that in talking about civilian staff he was referring to PCSOs, and other staff roles including call handlers, IMU officers and civilian crime investigators.

2. With regards to increasing funding for community policing teams, out of the extra 200 police officers 50 went directly into community and local policing teams, community policing also increased more broadly by boosting the number of rural policing officers and also creating a road safety team.

3. The number of PCSOs had been increased from their levels in 2016 and new crime prevention PCSOs were being trialled, more investment was going into community policing through a mixture of police officers and police staff.

4. The commissioner was not aware of any bespoke analysis, however there had been work done by the association of PCCs and the National Police Chief's Council on different methods of crime reduction and visibility which formed part of their bid to the treasury and included the use of officers and staff in order to support local communities.

Q2: Where there appears to be known drug dealers openly dealing in the district, being seen in the community and causing nuisance and ASB, could the Commissioner reassure the Panel that appropriate measures are being taken to hold the Chief Constable to account for delivering the Safer in Kent Plan as part of an effective and efficient Force, which includes supporting the fight against drug trafficking and misuse of illegal substances? (Jenny Hollingsbee)

5. The Commissioner offered reassurance that this had been raised with the Chief Constable and Assistant Chief Constable, where trends were identified action would be taken. The Commissioner was waiting to hear more about the efforts going in to tackling these issues through more local policing. At the Performance & Delivery Board (25 Sept) the Commissioner had given notice that he would ask the Chief Constable about Force action to tackle drug dealing in local communities.

6. The Commissioner gave some examples of where work had been going on to tackle drug related activity.

Q3: Could the Commissioner please confirm that he is satisfied with the Chief Constables preparations and plans for coordinating actions in Kent, particularly Ashford Borough, in response to traffic management and other issues in the event of a no deal Brexit. (Jo Gideon)

7. The Commissioner explained that in preparing for a deal or no-deal Brexit, Kent Police was working through the Kent Resilience Forum in order to manage potential disruption on the road network and ensure the smooth movement of traffic through the ports to support residents and businesses.

8. Highways England were responsible for the motorways and were working with Kent Police to ensure that appropriate resources were available. The Force was also working with the Department for Transport to ensure appropriate communication plans were in place. This required a substantial mutual aid request which was being managed nationally. The Force was continuing to develop comprehensive plans to mitigate disruption at Dover Port and Folkestone. In addition, the use of Manston and the impact on the M26 and the Dartford Crossing. Particularly with regards to Ashford, the Commissioner advised that the local council would be engaged through the Kent Resilience Forum. Brexit and policing were not just about ports, it was about the tools policing needed to get the job done. Policing and security should be an easy deal to do with the EU because all parties wanted to continue working together post Brexit.

9. Cllr Gideon referred to the temporary customs facility due to be based at Ashford and whether there was a contingency plan if junction 10a was not finished. The Commissioner confirmed that these issues would have been factored into the longer term planning around Brexit.

Q4: It has been in the media about Kent providing Taser training to Special Constables. I agree with the Chief Constable that it is "the right thing to do". It is planned that only those officers who have served for more than ten years and who undertake 40 hours' duty a month will be eligible to be deployed with Tasers. What are the views of the Police and Crime Commissioner on this, as Special Constables are trained to the same standards as regular officers, attend the same calls and do

the same as Police Officers? And how has the Commissioner held the Chief Constable account on this criteria? (Elaine Bolton)

10. The Commissioner explained that the Chief Constable had taken a decision to equip all officers with Taser, including being the first to try and do the same with special constables. However, it was a challenge because of the lack of established national criteria for the use of Taser by special constables. It was currently not allowed by the Home Office and that needed to change in order for the Chief Constable to be able to deploy Tasers.

11. It was essential that all police officers were equipped with the tools necessary to do their job. The Commissioner had received a bespoke briefing from the Chief Officer of Kent Special Constabulary who had advised that the criteria for selection had been recommended by special constables themselves and it was also a means of ensuring limited training availability was filtered based on experience. When national guidance was published, Kent would comply and amend standards accordingly. The Commissioner added that it would be discussed further at the Performance and Delivery Board on 25 September.

RESOLVED that the Commissioner's answers to Member questions be noted.

333. Future work programme

(Item D1)

RESOLVED that the future work programme be noted.

334. Minutes of the Commissioner's Performance and Delivery Board meeting held on 5 June 2019

(Item F1)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Performance and Delivery Board held on 5 June 2019 be noted.