

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ESSEX POLICE AND CRIME PANEL HELD AT COUNTY HALL, CHELMSFORD, ON 21 FEBRUARY 2013

Present:

Councillor

Malcolm Buckley
Graham Butland
Chris Hossack
Jeffrey Stanley
Bob Shepherd
Tim Young
Mary Sartin
John Jowers
Paul Sztumpf
Penny Channer
Jo McPherson
Peter Halliday
Gerard Rice
Robert Chambers
Ann Haigh
Councillor Ian Wright
was also in
attendance

Representing

Basildon Borough Council (Vice-Chairman)
Braintree District Council
Brentwood Borough Council
Castle Point Borough Council
Chelmsford City Council
Colchester Borough Council
Epping Forest District Council
Essex County Council (Chairman)
Harlow District Council
Maldon District Council
Rochford District Council
Tendring District Council
Thurrock Borough Council
Uttlesford District Council
Co-opted Member
Chelmsford Borough Council

Apologies for Absence

Tony Cox Southend Borough Council

The following Officers were in attendance throughout the meeting:

Gill Butterworth, Senior Policy and Strategy Officer, Strategic Services
Colin Ismay, Head of Scrutiny and Lead Governance Officer, Essex County
Council, Secretary to the meeting
Paul Warren, Chief Executive, Rochford District Council

The Chairman welcomed Ann Haigh and Gerard Rice to their first meeting of the Panel.

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2013 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:

That the words "In answer to a question raised by the member from Thurrock regarding the possibility of Council savings and match funding for PCSO's he clarified the position of policy that where the partner funder withdrew then it was clear that the police funding would also be withdrawn. However the Chief Constable invited to comment stated that whilst this was indeed the policy he would not want to see local intelligence lost and that there would be no redundancies made if this was indeed the case." be substituted for the words "He clarified the position with regard to the funding of PCSO posts: if an authority

was proposing to cease the match-funding the Commissioner needed early notification." On page 5 (Minute 6 The Proposed Police Precept for 2013/14).

4. Matter arising from the minutes

Councillor Sztumpf referred to the undertaking given by the Commissioner to provide the Panel with a separate note on reserves (page 5 Minute 6 The Proposed Police Precept for 2013/14). It was agreed that the information be e mailed to the Panel.

5. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made at this point.

6. Questions to the Chairman from Members of the Public

There were no questions from Members of the Public.

7. The Draft Police and Crime Plan

The Panel considered report EPCP/02/13 by the Secretary to the Panel setting out the arrangements for the Panel to review the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan. A copy of the draft plan was attached. In the report the Commissioner outlined the arrangements for consultation on the plan and how responses were dealt with.

Ann Haigh declared a personal interest as the Chair of Domestic Homicide Review.

The Commissioner introduced the Plan to the Panel which would be agreed by the end of March. He described it as a work in progress. He had had 32 responses to the consultation exercise. There was a measure of continuity from the previous plan; in time he wishes to set a new agenda but that was not feasible after only three months in office. There was pressure for some hard-edged targets and to get a commitment to local policing. He will hold the Chief Constable to account for delivering locally acknowledging that the types of crime being dealt with differ across the County.

A priority is dealing with Domestic Abuse as identified in the Whole Essex Community Budget pilot. Reducing the number of deaths on the roads across Essex is also a priority. The Commissioner is also keen to attacking crime by tackling the offenders, by changing the game and giving leadership to it. Performance Management is also important and how the Commissioner will hold the Chief Constable to account. The Commissioner wants to see less crime and thereby fewer victims of crime, to see public confidence in community safety and in the police. He will bring performance measures to the Panel as the performance regime is being developed. Essex is a remarkable County to police. He acknowledged that the section on finances is lean relating to community initiatives with figures.

The following points were made during the ensuing debate:

- In answer to a question about increasing the detection rates and the importance of the police following up on reported instances of crime, the Commissioner responded that it is important for the public to feel confident about reporting incidences of crime. For the Commissioner more important than detection was that there should be less crime. He acknowledged that detection rates needed to improve and this was being addressed with the Chief Constable as part of the Performance Management process. It was the commissioner's intention to publish the results of his monthly performance management meetings with the Chief Constable and to make the information available to the Panel. He pointed out that acquisitive crimes have low detection rates internationally. there was a debate to be had about where to concentrate the effort.
- In answer to a question relating to funding for Crime and Safety Partnerships and their accountability for that public funding, the Commissioner responded that he needed to learn about commissioning services and was looking to County Council resources for help. In the first year he would make it relatively simple for the Partnerships to obtain the funding and would look to the district councils and unitary authorities to provide scrutiny. He was looking in future to commission via the councils direct. Safer Essex would monitor the Commissioner and share best practice.
- In response to a suggestion in relation to the Crime and Safety Partnerships' priorities set out in Annex "A" to the draft plan that the Partnerships be asked to rank those priorities, the Commissioner responded that it was for the councils to sort out local priorities with their local Commander.
- In response to a suggestion that it was important to understand the priorities of Redbridge in relation to Epping Forest and a question arising from that concerning the relationship with the Metropolitan and the Railway Police the Commissioner responded that travelling crime was acknowledged as an issue at a tactical and strategic level. In relation to drugs coming into Essex via London the Commissioner stated that there needed to be a discussion with local councils in relation to importing crime and their housing policies.
- In response to a comment that increasing awareness of domestic violence may raise the level of reported crimes although leading to their being fewer victims, the Commissioner agreed that the figures would go up before they eventually went down. It was important to understand the reasons for increases in the figures.
- In response to a question on why Youth Reoffending had been identified as a priority, the Commissioner explained that he was passionate about focussing on where criminal activity starts. Reoffending as a whole is an important topic and it is easier and more successful working with young people.
- In response to a question about the Community Budgets project relating to supporting families with complex needs, the Commissioner commented that there was a way to go around implementing the Community Budget projects and he saw this as a medium-term solution. He felt that tighter linkages were needed.
- In response to a question about rapid changes of personnel at a local level impacting on the continuity of neighbourhood policing, the Commissioner

responded that this reflected concerns being raised about lack of continuity although he was not clear at this stage how the Chief constable might be held to account for this.

- It was suggested that the wording of the third paragraph in Section 6 be reviewed.
- It was suggested that there could be an Executive Summary of the Plan and actions could be in order of priority.
- It was stated that anti-social behaviour is a priority for the public but was not identified in the Plan as a separate priority presumably because it linked to other priorities. The Commissioner explained that the best way to tackle anti-social behaviour was through the areas outlined and to work locally and learn from experience.
- In response to a question about Locality Funding, the Commissioner explained how he would deal with funding for Community Safety projects in the coming financial year ahead of developing a process for the future.
- It was suggested that there could be stronger reference to dealing with drink and drugs as part of the Youth Offending priority. The Chairman suggested that this was moving into the area of Public Health to which the Commissioner responded that he wanted to get more involved with Public Health issues.
- It was further suggested that with regard to Section 5 tackling the consequences of drugs, alcohol abuse and mental health issues there was a lot of identification of the issues without identifying the solutions. This is not surprising given the limited time available but the Plan needs to be a living and working document that is kept under review.
- In relation to a question regarding collaboration with the public and the voluntary sector was covered in Section 5 Improving crime prevention.
- It was commented that recognising road safety in the plan was a good thing. The Commissioner commented that it was not about issuing speeding tickets but about reducing the amount of harm caused.
- In response to a question regarding the number of responses received to the consultation, the Commissioner stated that there had been some quality responses but he would have liked there to have been more.
- The Commissioner was asked to consider adding the A120 to the list of routes mentioned in Section 2.
- It was suggested that Health and Wellbeing Boards needed to be included as part of the narrative in Section 5 tackling the consequences of drugs, alcohol abuse and mental health issues.
- In response to a question relating to Section 6 Overview of Crime in Essex and a reduction in crime and whether this was reflected by experience, the Commissioner agreed that it was necessary to build confidence in the crime data and he was actively pursuing it.
- It was commented that it was good to see the figures set out in Section 8 Finances and Resources.

Having made these comments the Panel was agreed that what was proposed by the Commissioner was a sound Plan.

8. Confirmatory Hearing for the Appointment of the Chief Constable

The Panel considered a report by the Secretary to the Panel setting out the arrangements for the Panel to review the proposed appointment of the Chief Constable before he was confirmed in his post.

The paperwork

The Commissioner provided to the Panel a report by the independent member Mr John Cooke OBE on the selection process for the Chief Constable of Essex. The report and Annexes A – G to the report provided the Panel with the following information:

- (a) the name of the candidate;
- (b) the criteria used to assess the suitability of the candidate for the appointment;
- (c) why the candidate satisfies those criteria; and
- (d) the terms and conditions on which the candidate is to be appointed.

The Commissioner's preferred candidate was Mr Stephen Kavanagh, currently Deputy Assistant Commissioner in the Metropolitan Police Service. He provided a CV for the Panel.

The following was agreed as an outline of how the Hearing was to be conducted.

1. The Chairman to welcome the Candidate to the meeting and explain the Panel's intention of focussing on satisfying itself as to the Candidate's professional competence and personal independence. He will then clarify the options available to the Panel in terms of approval, refusal or veto of the appointments and emphasise the seriousness of making a recommendation to refuse or veto.
2. The Chairman to give the Candidate and the Commissioner the opportunity to clarify any matters of process before the hearing gets under way.
3. The Commissioner to demonstrate to the Panel the rigour of the selection process and why the Candidate has been selected.
4. The Panel to ask questions of the Commissioner.
5. The Candidate to introduce himself to the Panel and to outline briefly his suitability for the role in terms of professional competence and personal independence.
6. The Panel to ask questions of the Candidate.
7. The Commissioner and the Candidate to be given the opportunity to clarify any answers and ask any questions of the Panel.
8. The Chairman to confirm the next steps of the decision-making process.
9. The Chairman will adjourn the meeting to allow the Panel to consider its recommendation.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Kavanagh to the meeting.

The Commissioner, in explaining the selection process, started by expressing his regret at the current Chief Constable decision to retire. He explained the arrangements for advertising the post having sought advice from the Head of HR for the Kent and Essex Police. He set out his criteria for selecting candidates and the process for shortlisting. He explained that he had invited the Chief Executive of Essex County Council to join the panel for the interviews. He then explained his reasons for selecting Mr Kavanagh as an exceptional candidate with the motivation to want to take on the job in Essex. The Commissioner had also explained to Mr Kavanagh his expectation that he would serve a full term.

The Panel agreed that in an ideal situation the Chief Executive would have also been involved in the shortlisting process. The Commissioner nonetheless was appreciative of the Chief Executive's valuable input into the process.

The Panel questioned the Commissioner to satisfy itself that he had been objective in his selection process and as to the professional competence of Mr Kavanagh asking questions in relation to equality and diversity, dealing with rural crime, his attitude towards the Policing Plan and his relationship with the Commissioner, the scoring matrix, dealing with morale in the Force and his Leadership skills.

In response to a question on the diversity of the candidates, the Commissioner acknowledged that the ethnic mix of senior police officers is an issue that needs to be addressed at a national level.

The Panel was reassured as to the rigour of the selection process.

Mr Kavanagh then introduced himself to the Panel setting out his extensive experience of 28 years with the Metropolitan Police Force. The Panel tested Mr Kavanagh's professional competence by asking him to address questions relating to rural policing, the visibility of the Police, morale raising, perception of crime, public engagement and the third sector, why Essex, what he brings to Essex from the Metropolitan Police, relationships with the Metropolitan Police, policing protests, dealing with ethnic diversity, achieving stability and his appetite for innovation.

The Chairman then adjourned the meeting to enable the Panel to consider its view.

The Panel having reconvened unanimously supported Mr Stephen Kavanagh's appointment as Chief Constable of Essex without qualification or comment. The Chairman congratulated Mr Kavanagh on his appointment.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 26 March 2013.

Chairman
26 March 2013