

Minutes of the Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel Meeting held on 15 July 2019

Present: Stephen Sweeney (Chairman)

Carl Bennett
Randolph Conteh
Paul Darby
Stephen Doyle
Ann Edgeller

Brian Edwards
Simon Gaskin
Tony Holmes
Keith Walker
Jill Waring

Apologies: Ashley Yeates

PART ONE

1. Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED – That Mr Stephen Sweeney be appointed Chairman of the Panel for the ensuing year.

2. Appointment of Vice-Chairman

RESOLVED – That Mr Paul Darby be appointed Vice-Chairman of this Panel for the ensuing year.

3. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2019

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2019 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

5. Appointment/Re-appointment of Co-opted Member of Panel

The Secretary reported that Mr Walker's term of office as a co-opted member of the Panel would expire on 4 November 2019. He reported that the Panel's Procedure Rules provided for the re-appointment of co-optees for a second term of office. Mr Walker had confirmed his willingness to continue to serve as a Panel member.

RESOLVED – That Mr Walker be invited to serve as a co-opted member of the Panel for a further four year term commencing 5 November 2019.

6. Decisions published by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC)

Details were submitted of a decision made by the Commissioner relating to the Provision of Fuel Cards for Emergency Vehicles, which had been published since the Panel's last meeting.

7. Questions to the PFCC from Members of the Public

County Councillor Kyle Robinson attended the Panel and asked the Commissioner to meet with community representatives of Kidsgrove, Talke and Butt Lane to discuss their concerns at the increasing levels of crime and anti-social behaviour in their areas and the reduction in visible policing. Mr Robinson also handed to the Commissioner a 2000 signature petition opposing the closure of ~~Kidsgrove Police Station~~, the Public Police Desk located at Kidsgrove Town Hall (*note by Clerk – amendment agreed at Panel meeting 28/10/19*)

The Commissioner confirmed his willingness to meet with community representatives.

8. Police Establishment - Update

The Panel had sought to monitor Police Establishment numbers and recruitment following their decisions to support the Commissioner's wish to increase the Precepts for 2018/19 and 2019/20 partly to fund the appointment of a total of 69 additional Police Officers.

An Informal Workshop had been held in April 2019 to discuss Establishment numbers and recruitment, following which the Panel had requested further clarification of the numbers reported.

A Briefing note issued to members had shown an increase in the Target Operating Model of 67.5 Officers for the 2018-2020 period however members queried the discrepancy between the Target Operating Model base figures quoted by the Commissioner and the statistics recorded by the Home Office. Panel members' concerns were partly based on the national comparisons of policing numbers which showed Staffordshire to have had a year on year reduction in numbers over the last 10 years and to be second lowest in terms of police officers per 100,000 population.

The Commissioner reported on the constantly changing nature of Establishment figures due to reorganisation of the Force, retirements etc and the lengthy recruitment/training process. He also stressed that the Force's response to the changing demands on the service had resulted in an increased need for skills and expertise available from non-warranted personnel.

Whilst the Commissioner gave assurances that the additional Police Officers were being recruited he argued that due to changes in the Model for policing, focus should be on the overall capability and capacity of the Force rather than numbers of warranted Officers. The Chairman stressed the importance of the public having evidence of the increase in numbers in accordance with undertakings given at the time of setting the Precepts.

RESOLVED – That the Commissioner be requested to provide further information on the overall staffing profile of the Force, including a base establishment number on which

the commitment to recruit an additional 69 officers had been based and could be assessed.

9. Annual Report on the handling of complaints against the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

The Secretary referred the Panel's responsibility to consider complaints about the personal conduct of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and/or his Deputy, the day to day management of those complaints having been delegated to him. He reported that three complaints received during 2018/19 had related to administrative or operational matters rather than personal conduct and therefore had not been entered into the Panels complaints procedure.

RESOLVED – That the Annual Report be noted.

10. Home Office Grant 2018/19 - Report on Final Claim

The Secretary to the Panel presented his report on the allocation of the Home Office grant for the running costs of the Panel during 2018/19 explaining that an increase in Grant had been awarded mid year to reflect the addition of the Fire and Rescue Service to the Panel's remit. Of the £72,746 grant available a reclaim for £72,541.07 had been submitted.

The Secretary reported that, whilst the Home Office had issued an assurance that Grant levels would be maintained for 2019/20 no official notification of that Grant had been received to date.

RESOLVED: - that the allocation of the Home Office grant 2018/19 be noted and published in accordance with conditions of that grant.

11. IT Transformation Contract with Boeing - Progress

As requested, the Commissioner reported on the progress of the contract which he and the Force had with Boeing UK for the delivery of IT Transformation projects over a 10 year period at a contract price of around £100m.

Panel had asked for an update on the contract as it has been in operation for 3 years.

The Commissioner reported that to date Boeing's main focus had been on the delivery of the Niche integrated records management system which would replace 12 core systems which had been in use over the past 8-20 years. Originally savings of £0.5m - £1m had been predicted from updating IT capability however the Commissioner explained that any savings were affected by the level of demand for IT support therefore the wider roll out of the technology, the more cost. The roll out and costs were considered as part of the normal budget allocation processes.

The Commissioner reported that it was essential that systems operated by the Force were compatible with those of other Forces in order to be able to respond to national

policing needs and the increasing trend in cross Force boundary crime. Members sought information on the extent to which IT contributed to policing and the operating Model adopted in Staffordshire both at present and in the future.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted and the Commissioner be requested to present an overview of the use, and impact, of IT on policing in Staffordshire both currently and anticipated in the future.

12. Collaboration Update (Including Police Estate)

The Commissioner gave an update on collaboration opportunities between the Police and Fire and Rescue Services, particularly referring to the rationalisation of the Police Estate. He reported that 8 Police service buildings were being marketed for sale and commented on the pleasing level of bids received.

Members queried the arrangements for alternative public direct access to personal police support following the closure of a number of Stations, with reference made to the absence of any access points in the Rugeley area. The Commissioner acknowledged the need to better publicise arrangements for alternative access to police support.

Responding to a query on the intended use of Capital Receipts from the sale of buildings, the Commissioner reported that he would determine allocation in the future.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

13. Staffordshire Commissioner's Annual Report 2018/19

As statutorily required, the Panel considered and commented on the Commissioner's Annual Report on the progress of delivery of his Police and Crime Plan (The Safer, Fairer, United Communities for Staffordshire Strategy).

The main point discussed by the Panel for inclusion in their formal, published feedback to the Commissioner were:

- Acknowledgement of the success of the SPACE scheme, with 2018 attendances reported to be 30,000 with a 41% reduction in Anti Social Behaviour during the period when the scheme is in operation. Panel members commented on the dependence of the scheme on a Partnership approach.
- The development of a scheme to improve offenders' access to the Labour Market. The Commissioner reported the intended commissioning of a new service in 2019 aimed at offering employment opportunities for offenders in the construction sector. He also reported his views on the need for Prison Service reform to give emphasis to rehabilitation and prevention of re-offending
- The Panels' interest in the work of 'Catch 22' a social, not for profit business, delivering support for victims of CSE and children who go missing. In 2018/19 3,126 reports were received of children missing from home/care, involving 1,421 children. The Commissioner reported on multi agency work to address this issue both within the UK and beyond. In addition, Catch 22 had received 365 referrals for children requiring support around CSE.

RESOLVED – That the Panel’s views be formally reported to the Commissioner and published on the Panel’s and Commissioner’s websites.

14. Safer, Fairer, United Communities for Staffordshire -Update

The Commissioner presented his quarterly update on the delivery of the Safer, Fairer, United Communities for Staffordshire Strategy, identifying for each priority area the activity over the quarter, planned activity and milestones ahead.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

15. Fire and Rescue Corporate Safety Plan 2020/2023 - Progress

The Commissioner presented an update on the delivery of the Fire and Rescue Service Corporate Safety Plan which incorporated the Integrated Risk Management Plan. He detailed the progress of Work Programmes and projects under each of the 3 priorities in the Plan namely: Education and Engagement, Community Safety and Wellbeing, and Planning, Resilience and Response.

The Commissioner particularly referred to his wish to build on the success and effectiveness of Safe and Well visits through collaboration with the Police Service. He also reported on the challenge of recruiting Retained Firefighters but stressed his determination to ensure that sufficient cover existed County -wide.

Referring to potential opportunities for wider collaboration, the Commissioner confirmed that he would continue to seek discussions with the West Midlands Ambulance Service on First Response arrangements.

The intention to hold a Workshop/Briefing for Panel members on the requirements of the Corporate Safety Plan prior to formal consultation on its contents was noted

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

16. Fire and Rescue Plan 2019/20 -Draft Interim Version

The Commissioner reported that whilst he was required to produce and issue a Fire and Rescue Plan shortly following the transfer to him of governance responsibility for the Service, he proposed to provide an Interim Plan only. This would enable his successor, to be elected in May 2020, to align all Plans required for the 2020-2024 period. He submitted his Interim Plan for comment.

RESOLVED – That the Interim Plan for 2019/20 be supported.

17. Questions to the PFCC by Panel Members

Members of the Panel questioned/sought the views of the Commissioner on the following issues and received the responses indicated:

Question/Issue	Response
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What transition arrangements is the Commissioner putting in place to assist his successor post May 2020	The normal procedures for handover will be followed
Has the closure of the Burton Custody facility had any detrimental affect on the efficiency of the service	The reduction to 2 sites has been successful. Custody Service provision has been returned in house. Recruitment of Detention Officers is proving to be challenging.
What progress has been made with discussions with Districts and Boroughs on CCTV systems	All Leaders have been contacted as agreed. Differing views. It may be feasible for them to explore joint working arrangements. Note that the budget previously provisionally earmarked by the OPCC is no longer available.
Can PCSOs be authorised to deal with parking offences	Will pursue with the Chief Constable
Parking restrictions in the vicinity of the A50/A500/Bet 365 Stadium need to be actively enforced.	Will pursue with the Chief Constable

18. Dates of Future Meetings and Work Programme

RESOLVED – That with the addition of a Workshop/Briefing on the Fire and Rescue Service Corporate Safety Plan, the Work Programme and Schedule of Meetings be approved.

Chairman