

Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Report of the Chairman of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel

To Staffordshire County Council

In accordance with agreed practice, I am reporting on matters dealt with by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel at its meeting on 7 December 2021.

The main items considered were:

Questions to the PFCC from Members of the Public

No questions were raised by the public prior to the meeting.

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

The Panel considered the following decisions which had been published on the Commissioners website since the last meeting:

- Immediate Detriment Framework Adoption by Fire and Rescue
- Children and Young Peoples Sexual Assault Referral Service

No questions were asked.

Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) - Police Service

The report updated the Panel on the current MTFS for the Police Force. It set out the current year's budget; updated MTFS assumptions; an analysis of key financial items; and an update on capital programme. The report also outlined the budget process and provided uplift numbers for members information.

The Commissioner explained that the budget would be constructed differently this year and this may result in some challenging discussions with the new Chief Constable. Budget challenge sessions would be held and the results would be shared with the Panel in the full budget report in January 2022 when the panel consider the Commissioners proposed precept level.

The Panel expressed concern over inflation costs, as this was viewed as the biggest risk factor. It was also felt that increased National Insurance costs from both employees and employers' way prove challenging.

It was reported that there had been no delay or problems in the recruitment of the additional 120 police officers during this financial year.

The recently announced National Government Drug strategy was discussed and the implications for mental health services and treatment programmes. The Commissioner explained the early intervention

strategies currently employed which included stopping production and sales, and the need for timely treatment and rehabilitation programmes.

The Panel thanked the Commissioner for the update ahead of the precept meeting in January.

The Panel noted the contents of the report.

Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) - Fire and Rescue Service

The report updated the Panel on the current MTFS. It set out the current years budget; updated MTFS assumptions; the impact of Covid on financial performance; analysis of key financial items; and an update on the capital programme.

The Panel were informed that the end of year budget figures were showing a slight underspend.

Again, the panel was informed that more information would be available at the Fire and Rescue precept meeting in February 2022. It was felt that the position was positive at the moment, but this was prior to the impact of winter pressures and rising prices.

Following a question on the increase in pay costs, it was explained that this was due to the increase in additional shifts to cover sickness.

The Panel noted the contents of the report.

Police and Crime and Fire and Rescue Plan consultation outcomes

The Commissioner explained the consultation process for both the Police and Crime and the Fire and Rescue Plans, the feedback received and how the plans had been amended to reflect the comments/concerns of reciprocates. The Plans had been published on the Commissioners website and would be considered in detail at a future meeting of the Panel.

The response to the consultation had been at a similar level to that expected but was reduced from the previous consultation. This was explained as due to GDPR, database contacts had been removed and the Citizens panel no longer exists.

There was a general discussion on the priorities in the plans and the need for detailed action plans to address some of the specific issues that were being experienced in the communities. These issues included:

- Consultation on planning applications so that new housing estates could be accessed if emergencies occurred.
- Visits to elderly in their homes – with more prevention information and a wider range of services.

- Quicker response rates in some rural communities.
- Visibility of police officers and use of staff resources to reassure the public.
- The use of volunteers.
- More communication with those people who don't normally respond to consultation exercises.

The Panel noted the contents of the report.

Annual Conference for PFCC report

The Panel received a report from its member representatives at the AGM of the National Conference for Police, Fire and Crime Panels, held on 2 November 2021 at Warwick University.

Workshops attended as part of the National Conference had included discussions on 'Scrutinising the Commissioners Performance Framework' Funding and future direction' and 'Complaints handling'.

Questions to the PFCC by Panel Members

No further questions were asked.

Webcast can be found at [Browse meetings - Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel - Staffordshire County Council](#)

For more information on these meetings or on the Police, Fire and Crime Panel in general please contact Mandy Pattinson e mail mandy.pattinson@staffordshire.gov.uk

Details of Panel meetings are issued to contact officers in each of the District/Borough Councils in the County and Stoke-on-Trent City Council for posting on their own web sites.

Councillor Richard Cox (Vice Chairman in the Chair)
Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel Chairman