

Lancashire Police and Crime Panel

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 26th November, 2012 at 10.00 am in Conference Room 1, Town Hall, Blackburn

Present:

Chair

Councillor K Hollern (Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council)

Committee Members

Councillor A Barnes, Rossendale Borough Council

Councillor P Barton, Hyndburn Borough Council

Councillor J Cooper, Burnley Borough Council

County Councillor G Driver, Lancashire County Council

Councillor M Foxley, Pendle Borough Council

Councillor P Gibson, Wyre Borough Council

Councillor I Grant, West Lancs Borough Council

Councillor L Oades, Fylde Borough Council

Councillor P Rankin, Preston City Council

Councillor M Ranson, Ribble Valley Borough Council

Councillor M Smith, South Ribble Borough Council

Councillor M Thomas, Lancaster City Council

Mr S Vali, Independent Co-opted member

Also in attendance

- Ian Fisher, County Secretary and Solicitor - Lancashire County Council
- Roy Jones, Assistant County Secretary - Lancashire County Council
- Mike Neville, Senior Committee Support Officer - Lancashire County Council
- Mr C Grunshaw, Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire
- Miranda Carruthers-Watt, Chief Executive – Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were presented on behalf of Councillor T Kennedy (Burnley) and Mr P Richardson, independent co-opted member and received from Councillor P Wilson (Chorley).

2. Minutes of the last meeting.

Resolved: that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 1st October 2012 be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

3. Update on the Constitution of the Police and Crime Panel

It was reported that since the last meeting the Director General (Crime and Policing Group) at the Home Office had written to the Chief Executive of the County Council to confirm that the Home Secretary had formally approved the co-option of the three

additional elected representatives to the Panel. The Panel was therefore fully constituted with 20 members each having full voting rights.

It was also noted that Burnley Borough Council had confirmed that Councillor T Kennedy had replaced Councillor Mottershead on the Panel.

Resolved:

1. That the confirmation of the appointment of an additional three elected representatives by the Home Secretary be noted.
2. That it be noted that following the confirmation specified in 1 above the Police and Crime Panel for Lancashire is now fully constituted on the basis of 18 elected representatives and 2 independent co-opted members, all of whom have full voting rights.

4. Programme of Meetings

It was reported that in accordance with the decision of the Panel at the last meeting further consideration had been given to the start time of meetings with a view to some being held in the evenings and a revised programme of meetings was presented. In considering the report the Panel noted that two meetings would be held in the evening. It was suggested that consideration be given to some future meetings of the Panel also being held at the Town Hall in Blackpool

Resolved: That the future meetings of the Panel be held as follows.

- 17th December 2012 - 10.00am, in Cabinet Room 'C', County Hall Preston.
- 29th January 2013 - 10.00am, in Meeting Room 'A' at Blackburn Town Hall
- 12th February 2013 - 6.30pm, in Cabinet Room 'C', County Hall, Preston.
- 13th March 2013 - 10.00am in Meeting Room 'A' at Blackburn Town Hall.
- 8th July 2013 - 6.30pm in Cabinet Room 'D' at County Hall, Preston.

5. Police and Crime Commissioner

The Chair welcomed the newly elected Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire, Mr C Grunshaw, to the meeting.

The Chair expressed the Panel's intention to carry out its scrutiny role and work in partnership with the Commissioner and her hope that collectively they would ensure that they achieved the best for the people of Lancashire.

Mr Grunshaw addressed the meeting with regard to his role and priorities as Commissioner and reported that his priorities were as follows.

- Maintaining a visible policing presence.
- Protecting neighbourhood policing.
- Prioritising antisocial behaviour, domestic violence and child sexual exploitation.
- Championing the rights of victims, and
- Reducing reoffending.

He recognised that Lancashire Constabulary was a top performing force with a reputation for delivering excellent neighbourhood policing, with year on year crime reductions and there was a history of partnership working in Lancashire. He also acknowledged that the members of the Panel had extensive knowledge and experience from the different communities across Lancashire and hoped that the Panel would act as a critical friend, providing constructive challenge and support in order that he could provide strong leadership and a focus for crime reduction and community safety.

Mr Grunshaw also took the opportunity to announce his intention to appoint Mr I Master as Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC) who he felt had relevant experience as a member of the former Lancashire Police Authority and from his work with local communities. The appointment of a DPCC was discussed and the Panel noted that the appointment would be subject to a formal confirmation hearing in accordance with the process set out in the next item on the agenda.

With regard to a question about community policing Mr Grunshaw acknowledged that the public liked Police and Crime Support Officers (PCSOs) who were a useful source of intelligence to the Police. He expressed the intention to maintain funding for PCSOs though he recognised that some posts were jointly funded with local authorities and would require an ongoing commitment from partners.

Resolved:

1. That the appointment of Mr C Grunshaw as the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire be noted.
2. That the intention to appoint Mr I Master as Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner be noted and, subject to the receipt of formal notification, consideration be given to the holding of a confirmation hearing as set out in the next item on the agenda.

6. Procedure for dealing with Confirmation Hearings.

In view of the announcement by the Police and Crime Commissioner under the previous item regarding his intention to appoint a Deputy, the Panel agreed that a confirmation hearing should be held at the next scheduled meeting on the basis set out in the report.

Resolved: That, subject to the receipt of formal notification from the Police and Crime Commissioner of his intention to appoint Mr I Master as the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire, arrangements be made for a confirmation hearing to be held at the next scheduled meeting of the Panel on the 17th December 2012.

7. Procedure for dealing with Complaints about the Police and Crime Commissioner

A report was presented regarding various options as to how the Panel could fulfil its statutory duty for the handling of complaints against the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, once appointed.

When considering the options it was noted that that it was possible to delegate the initial handling of complaints to the Commissioner's Chief Executive. However, in the interests of transparency and in order to maintain the integrity of the Panel there was general

agreement that the initial handling of complaints should be undertaken by the Secretary to the Panel in his role as the Monitoring Officer of the host authority. This option had only very recently been made permissible under Government Regulations.

In order to facilitate the timely consideration of any matters referred to the Panel it was also agreed that a Sub Committee should be established with delegated powers to undertake the resolution of complaints. It was noted that in accordance with the Regulations, any matter being handled in accordance with Part 4 may be remitted at any time to the Panel as a whole (whether at the request of the Sub Committee, the complainant or the person complained against, or otherwise) if the Panel is of the opinion that this will lead to a more satisfactory resolution of the complaint.

The Panel noted that in the absence of any provision in legislation or guidance regarding who should handle a complaint made against the Panel itself the position on this would be reviewed when such provision is made. In the meantime each member of the Panel would be subject to their respective appointing Authority's Codes of Conduct and the 2 independent co-opted members of the Panel would adopt the Code of Conduct of the host authority.

Resolved:

1. That the Secretary to the Panel be responsible for the initial handling and administration of complaints against the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner.
2. That a Complaints Sub Committee, on the basis of 5 members of the Panel (2 from the labour group, 2 from the conservative group and 1 other member, with names to be nominated to and agreed by the Secretary of the Panel) be established with the following delegated powers and duties to act on the Panel's behalf when considering the informal resolution of complaints:
 - a) To consider any complaint referred to the Panel by the Secretary to the Panel in accordance with Part 4 of the Complaints Regulations relating to informal resolution.
 - b) To consider complaints which appear to relate to the conduct of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) or Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC) where the Secretary of the Panel considers that either there is an actual or perceived, conflict of interest or possible negative public perception in respect of him taking the decision whether to record a Complaint or Conduct Matter, or in respect of him, identifying a Serious Complaint for subsequent referral to the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC).
 - c) To consider any matters referred back to the Panel by the IPCC (including a Serious Complaint that has been referred to the IPCC and then referred back to the Panel);
 - d) That meetings of the Sub Committee be convened by the Secretary to the Panel, in consultation with the Chair of the Panel as and when required.

3. That the Secretary to the Panel be responsible for the monitoring of complaints in order to ensure that complaints are considered in an appropriate manner and to provide regular updates to the Panel regarding the findings.
4. That the arrangements adopted by the Panel for the handling and resolution of complaints be reviewed after 6 months' operation and a report on the findings presented to the Panel in July 2013
5. That the Secretary to the Panel identifies a contact point for the Independent Police Complaints Commission.
6. That the 2 independent co-opted members of the Panel adopt the Code of Conduct of the County Council.

8. The Scrutiny Function of the PCP

A report was present regarding recently published guidance from the Centre for Public Scrutiny and the Local Government Association in relation to the scrutiny function of the Panel. It was noted that the guidance would be a useful source of reference as the Panel developed its scrutiny role in the future.

Resolved: That the guidance in relation to the scrutiny role of the Panel be noted.

9. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business for discussion at the meeting.

10. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next scheduled meeting would be held at 10.00am in Cabinet Room 'C' at County Hall, Preston.

Ian Fisher
Secretary to the Police and Crime Panel

Lancashire County Council
County Hall
Preston