

Police and Crime Panel for Lancashire

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 8th July, 2013 at 10.00 am in Committee Room 'A', Blackpool Town Hall

Present:

Chair

Councillor Kate Hollern, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

Committee Members

Councillor Alyson Barnes, Rossendale Borough Council
Councillor Pam Barton, Hyndburn Borough Council
Councillor Simon Blackburn, Blackpool Council
Councillor Alistair Bradley, Chorley Borough Council
Councillor Margaret Brindle, Burnley Borough Council
Councillor R Boswell, Preston City Council
Councillor Julie Cooper, Burnley Borough Council
Councillor Margaret Foxley, Pendle Borough Council
Councillor Peter Gibson, Wyre Borough Council
Councillor Ian Grant, West Lancs Borough Council
Councillor Stuart Hirst, Ribble Valley Borough Council
County Councillor Sean Serridge, Lancashire County Council
Councillor David Smith, Lancaster City Council
Councillor Malcolm Thomas, Lancaster City Council
Paul Richardson, Independent co-opted member
Shiraj Vali, Independent co-opted member

County Councillor S Serridge replaced County Councillor J Mein at the meeting.

Also in attendance

- Mr I Fisher, Secretary to the Police and Crime Panel.
- Mr R Jones, Assistant Secretary to the Police and Crime Panel.
- Ms H Denton, Executive Director for Adult and Community Services and Public Health, Lancashire County Council
- Ms M Ormesher, Community Safety Manager, Lancashire County Council.
- Mr S Finnegan, Chief Constable, Lancashire Constabulary.
- Mr C Grunshaw, Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire.
- Ms M Carruthers-Watt, Chief Executive - Office of the PCC.

1. Constitution, Membership and Terms of Reference of the Panel

Following a suggestion by the Chairman the Panel agreed that item 3 be taken as the first item of business.

It was reported that following the County Council elections on the 2nd May the political balance of the Panel had been recalculated adopting the previously agreed model for achieving the political proportionality requirements. Options for the revised balance of the Panel on this basis were presented to the Panel.

It was noted that each constituent authority had been consulted on the revised balance of the Panel and asked to appoint a member to the Panel, with the intention of up to three local Authorities appointing an additional member on the previously agreed basis to achieve political proportionality. Appointments made by the constituent local authorities resulted in the political balance of the Panel being 9 Labour, 7 Conservative, 1 Lib Dem and 1 Independent Member. The Panel recognised that guidance made it clear that the best Panel arrangements were those which were determined locally and by agreement by each constituent local authority. The Panel were asked to agree to the balance of the Panel on the basis of the appointments made by each individual local authority, to reflect the leadership of each authority, together with the three additional appointments, as now reported, to satisfy political balance requirements.

It was also proposed that in the interests of openness and transparency the hosting of the Panel should rotate between the County Council and the two unitary authorities, with a nominated senior officer from the relevant host authority acting as the Secretary to the Panel. There was general agreement that meetings of the Panel should continue to rotate between the three authorities.

The current Terms of Reference and Arrangements for the Panel were noted. The Operational Procedure was also discussed and there was general agreement that the Panel should adopt the County Councils Standing Orders insofar as they relate to the rules of debate at Committees.

With regard to public participation at future meetings the Chairman suggested that in the interest of openness and transparency the public should be allowed to submit questions in writing to the Panel. It was also noted that any public participation should be in relation to the strategic concerns of the Panel and not connected with new or ongoing complaints which would be dealt with via a separate process.

Resolved:

1. That the constitution of the Police and Crime Panel for Lancashire, on the basis of appointments made by each local authority, be noted and agreed as 18 Elected Members on the basis of 9 Labour, 7 Conservative, 1 Liberal Democrat and 1 Independent Member, reflecting the political leadership of each authority and three additional appointments, as now reported, to satisfy political balance requirements.
2. That the following appointment members from each constituent authority be noted:

Local Authority	Representative(s)	Party
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Lancashire	J Mein	Labour
Blackburn with Darwen	K Hollern	Labour
Blackpool	S Blackburn	Labour
Burnley	J Cooper	Labour
	M Brindle	Lib/Dem
Chorley	A Bradley	Labour
Fylde	D Eaves	Conservative
	L Oades	Independent
Hyndburn	P Barton	Labour
Lancaster	D Smith	Labour
	M Thomas	Conservative
Pendle	M Foxley	Conservative
Preston	R Boswell	Labour
Ribble Valley	S Hirst	Conservative
Rossendale	A Barnes	Labour
South Ribble	Mrs M Smith	Conservative
West Lancashire	I Grant	Conservative
Wyre	P Gibson	Conservative

The Secretary to inform each constituent authority of the change to the political balance of the Panel.

3. That, with effect from the next meeting, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council will act as host authority for the Panel with a senior officer from that authority acting as the Secretary to the Panel. The position of host authority to rotate between Blackpool Borough Council, Lancashire County Council and Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council in subsequent years with each respective host authority appointing a senior officer to act as the Secretary, who will assume all responsibilities delegated to the current Secretary to the Panel.
4. That the current Terms of Reference and Arrangements for the Panel as set out in the Minute Book, are noted.
5. That the current Operational Procedure is amended as indicated below and a copy of the revised document circulated to all members of the Panel and set out in the Minute Book.
 - i) That the County Councils Standing Orders regarding the rules of debate at Committees be adopted in relation to future meetings of the Panel.
 - ii) That the public be allowed to submit questions to the Panel and that the Chairman and Secretary agree the basis for public participation at future meetings of the Panel.

2. Appointment of the Chairman

Resolved: That Councillor K Hollern is appointed as the Chairman of the Panel for the remainder of the 2013/14 municipal year.

3. Appointment of the Deputy Chairman

Resolved: That Councillor S Blackburn is appointed as the Deputy Chairman of the Panel for the remainder of the 2013/14 municipal year.

4. Programme of Meetings for 2013/14

A report was presented regarding the proposed programme of meetings for 2013/14. In accordance with previous decisions of the Panel it was noted that future meetings would continue to rotate between Preston, Blackburn and Blackpool and also be held both during the day and in the evening.

With regard to the proposed date in April 2014 the Chair suggested that the meeting start at 10.00am and not 6.30pm.

Resolved: That programme of meetings for 2013/14 is agreed as set out below:

- Tuesday 15th October, 2013 - 10.00am in Meeting Room 'A' at the Town Hall, King William Street, Blackburn.
- Monday 27th January 2014 - 6.30pm in the Henry Bollingbroke Room (formerly Cabinet Room 'D') at County Hall, Preston.
- Tuesday 11th February 2014 - 10.00am in Conference Room 1 at the Town Hall, King William Street, Blackburn.
- Monday 7th April 2014 - 10.00am in the Henry Bollingbroke Room (formerly Cabinet Room 'D') at County Hall, Preston
- Monday 7th July 2014 (AGM) - 10.00am in Committee Room 'A' at the Town Hall, Corporation Street, Blackpool

5. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs M Smith (South Ribble) and Councillor L Oades (Fylde).

6. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on the 12th February 2013 be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

7. Monitoring of complaints

In response to a query it was confirmed that an announcement from the IPCC was still awaited in relation to one of the complaints set out in the Appendix.

Resolved: That the report be noted

8. Update from the Police and Crime Commissioner

The Commissioner presented a report to update the Panel in relation to various ongoing areas of work including the Police and Crime Plan, public engagement, the development of Community Safety Plan and the establishment of the Community Action Fund.

It was reported that since the last meeting the final version of the Police and Crime Plan had been published and was available to view on the PCC website and there had been positive feedback from both partners and the public in connection with the aims and priorities set out in the Plan.

Quarterly Constabulary/OPCC Strategic Scrutiny meetings had also taken place with discussions generally focused around the current financial position.

The Commissioner reported that from a forecast budget up to 2017/18 of £285 million it was intended to secure savings in the region of £74 million, £40 million of which had already been identified with options currently under consideration in relation to a further £24 million savings over the next 3 years. In addition the Governments recent Comprehensive Spending Review had indicated a further £10 million of savings were required and this would also need to be taken into account when making plans for the future. He added that the Constabulary would continue to improve its efficiency and would seek to reinvest any underspend from existing budgets.

The Chief Constable reported that some of the savings made to date had been the result of vacancies at Divisional Commander or Departmental Head level not being filled.

In response to a query the Commissioner reported that Police pensions were excluded from any reserves and were held nationally.

Resolved: That the updates provided by the Commissioner and Chief Constable be noted.

9. Operational changes within the Lancashire Constabulary boundary

The Chief Constable gave a presentation to the Panel on the proposed operational changes to Lancashire Constabulary, a copy of which is set out in the Minute Book.

It was reported that in 2014 the Constabulary would undergo a significant structural change in order to be able to continue to provide a high quality service within an increasingly demanding climate. The Chief Constable referred to comments made previously by the Commissioner in relation to the 7 year forecast budget, the savings which had already been secured and those which would need to be identified in the future and reassured the Panel that the relationship between the Police and partner organisations would not be diminished as a result of the proposed changes.

The Panel was informed that since April 2009 around 500 Police Officers and 200 other staff had been lost and that those who remained were increasingly being expected to take

on additional duties and change working patterns which had led to an emphasis on wellbeing services to support staff.

Currently there were around 70 reviews across the whole of the service which would look at processes, identify any areas where efficiency could be improved and build capacity so that the Constabulary would be able to maximise the use of its reduced resources in the future.

It was noted that previously funding for Police and Crime Support Officers (PCSOs) had been ring fenced though that was no longer the case and discussions were under way with the PCC about the future use of such officers. The Chief Constable also reported that a new scheme would create 450 cadets aged between 13 and 18 and there were also plans to look at making more use of volunteers and increase the number of Special Constables to around 650 which would assist in providing the visible frontline policing which many of the public wanted.

With regard to performance the Chief Constable informed the meeting that in the future the emphasis would move away from the outcomes and the volume of crimes towards targeted outcomes over 3 years, as set out in the Police and Crime Plan.

Proposed changes to the structure of the Constabulary were discussed and the Chief Constable reported that the number of Assistant Chief Constables would be reduced from 3 to 2 and Chief Superintendents from 10 to 5. The current 6 police divisions would also be merged into 3 larger Divisions with some of the support services no longer being based centrally and relocated within each Division.

In response to a query the Chief Constable informed the meeting that a number of stakeholders had been consulted regarding the proposed changes and whilst there were understandably some concerns there was also an understanding and acceptance of the realism of the economic situation which the Constabulary, like many other organisations, would face in the future.

It was noted that no decision had been taken to date as to the location of the headquarters for each of the 3 new Divisions and the Chief Constable reassured members of the Panel that there were no plans to close any existing Police Stations as a result of the changes.

With regard to the future of PCSOs it was reported that whilst there had been changes to the funding of such posts it was considered that they still played an important role in maintaining the neighbourhood policing approach. It was noted there were 60 vacancies resulting from PCSOs applying to become Police Officers and a further 14 vacancies where previous arrangements to match fund PCSOs had been discontinued. The Chief Constable reported that it was felt that the 74 vacancies could be absorbed within current resources and the remaining 395 PCSOs would continue to provide a valuable service. The Commissioner stated that from his road shows it was clear that the public viewed the PCSOs as a key part of visible frontline neighbourhood policing.

Resolved:

1. That the presentation by the Chief Constable be noted.

- 2 That a copy of the presentation be circulated to all members of the Panel for information.

Councillors S Blackburn, P Gibson and M Thomas left the meeting at this point due to other commitments.

10. Lancashire Community Safety Strategy Group - Performance 2012-13

Ms Ormesher, Community Safety Manager from the County Council, gave a presentation on the work of the Community safety partnership, a copy of which is set out in the Minute Book.

It was noted that the partnership would continue to work to ensure that mainstream resources were used in the ways which maximised their impact and Ms Denton, the County Council Executive Director with responsibility for community safety, reported that one example of this was information relating to housing type/occupancy being used to help the Fire and Rescue Service adopt a more target approach in relation to fire safety and smoke detector installation.

Resolved: That the presentation be noted.

11. Urgent Business

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

12. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that in accordance with the earlier decision of the Panel the next scheduled meeting would be held at 10.00am on the 15th October 2013 in Meeting Room 'A' at the Town Hall, King William Street, Blackburn.

Ian Fisher
Secretary to the Police and Crime Panel

Lancashire County Council
County Hall
Preston