

Lancashire Police and Crime Panel

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 17th December, 2012 at 10.00 am in Cabinet Room 'C' - County Hall, Preston

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 S Blackburn, Blackpool Council

Councillor M Brindle, Burnley Borough Council (replaced Councillor T Kennedy)

Councillor M Chew, Fylde Borough Council (replaced Councillor L Oades)

Councillor J Cooper, Burnley Borough Council

County Councillor G Driver, Lancashire County Council

Councillor D Eaves, Fylde Borough Council

Councillor M Foxley, Pendle Borough Council

Councillor P Gibson, Wyre Borough Council

Councillor I Grant, West Lancs Borough Council

Councillor P Mullineaux, South Ribble Borough Council (replaced Councillor Mrs M Smith)

Councillor P Rankin, Preston City Council

Councillor M Ranson, Ribble Valley Borough Council

Councillor D Smith, Lancaster City Council

Councillor P Wilson, Chorley Borough Council (replaced Councillor A Bradley)

Mr P Richardson, Independent co-opted member

Mr S Vali, Independent co-opted member

Also in attendance

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

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were presented on behalf of Councillor M Thomas (Lancaster).

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on the 26th November 2012 confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

3. Briefing on the Police and Crime Plan

With the agreement of the Chair the Police and Crime Commissioner made a statement with regard to a complaint which had been made against him in relation to alleged irregularities concerning expenses he had claimed whilst he was a member of Lancashire County Council and the Lancashire Police Authority.

The Secretary reported that in view of the nature of the complaint which had been received it would be referred to the Independent Police Complaints Commission for a decision regarding any investigation.

Ms Carruthers-Watt presented a briefing regarding the proposed Police and Crime Plan and informed the Panel that following initial discussions with the Chief Constable and other partners the intention was for an initial draft Plan to be produced towards the end of December. The draft plan would then be subject to a consultation process which would include presentation to the Panel on the 12th February 2013.

Resolved: That the statement made by the Police and Crime Commissioner and the proposed timetable for the development of the Police and Crime Plan be noted.

4. Briefing in respect of the budget/precept process.

Ms Kitto, the Chief Finance Officer for the Office of the PCC, circulated a briefing paper regarding the budget/precept process, a copy of which is set out in the Minute Book.

In considering the paper the Panel noted the following timescale associated with the budgetary process.

- the PCC must notify the Panel of the proposed precept by 1st February 2013;
- the Panel will review the proposed precept and make a report to the PCC (whether it vetoes the precept or not) by the 8th February 2013;
- in the event that the Panel vetoed the precept, the PCC would need to have regard to the Panel's report, respond to it and publish his response, including his revised precept, by the 15th February 2013;
- the Panel must then review the revised precept and issue a second report to the PCC by the 22nd February 2013;
- the PCC would then need to have regard to the second report, respond and publish his response, by the 1st March 2013.

Resolved: It was noted that the Police and Crime Commissioner would present the relevant budget information and proposed precept to the next scheduled meeting of the Panel for consideration.

5. Confirmation hearing in respect of the appointment of a Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire.

The Chair adjourned the meeting for 10 minutes to allow all the members of the Panel an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the guidance in relation to the confirmation hearing process which had previously been circulated.

The meeting reconvened at 10.30am and the Chair briefly outlined the process which would be followed in relation to the confirmation hearing.

With the agreement of the Chair, Mr Grunshaw, the Police and Crime Commissioner, addressed the meeting and reminded the Panel that during the election he had stated his intention to appoint Mr Master as the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner as he felt he had the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to fulfil the role. Mr Grunshaw asked the Panel to support the appointment.

Mr Master referred the members of the Panel to the contents of his personal statement and made reference to the experience and expertise which he felt he would bring to the position of DPCC.

When considering the appointment members of the Panel discussed the following points.

- Mr Master's membership of the Labour Party and his previous position as an independent member of the Lancashire Police Authority (LPA).

It was noted that membership of a political party did not disqualify Mr Master from being the DPCC and that the cross party Panel which had considered his appointment to the LPA had been aware of his political affiliations. It was also noted that members of the LPA were either appointed on the basis of being elected representatives (local councillors) or independent members.

- Whether Mr Master had sufficient experience/knowledge of the diversity of communities across Lancashire in order to ensure that he could deal with competing demands for resources in the future.

Mr Master referred to his previous work with local communities and the Voluntary Sector in addition to his experience of working as a member of the LPA which had all involved engagement with communities across Lancashire.

- The need to ensure that operational issues were kept separate from the monitoring role of the DPCC.

In response Mr Master referred to his experience as a member of the LPA and the professional working relationships he had developed both with the Chief Constable and other senior officers without compromising the need for independence.

- Whether given his other business/community activities Mr Master would be able to devote sufficient time to the role of DPCC.

Mr Master referred to how he felt he had been able to effectively divide his time when he was a member of the LPA and stated that being self employed he had a degree of flexibility in terms of his work. He also reported that his family were able to provide support in terms of his business interests.

- Whether Mr Master had the necessary experience to fulfil the role of the DPCC.

Whilst acknowledging that the crime and justice element of the work of the PCC was new and would be challenging Mr Master stated that his experience as a member of the LPA in relation to dealing with senior officers in the Police, communication, consultation, engagement and the setting/managing of budgets would enable him to support the PCC.

- The potential impact of Mr Master's position as a Deputy Lieutenant on this work as the DPCC.

Mr Master informed the meeting that he had been appointed as a Deputy Lieutenant in relation to his community work and that felt the role had enabled him to engage with a variety of communities across Lancashire. He added that if successfully appointed as the DPCC he intended to resign as Deputy Lieutenant in order to hold a single public office.

- How Mr Master intended to take a lead on dealing with business crime.

In response Mr Master reported that from his experience of dealing with the business community he was aware of the issues regarding crime which directly affected them and had urged the PCC to take the needs of businesses into account in the future.

- The recent announcement of the appointment by the PCC of additional Assistant Commissioners who had been members of the LPA.

In response Mr Master reminded the Panel that the PCC had made the appointments in accordance with legislation.

- Clarification regarding the reference in the personal statement to the need to build bridges between the Police and communities.

Mr Master recognised that in the current economic climate there would be additional demands on Police resources and felt it was important to ensure that resources were used in an efficient/effective manner. He added that building bridges between policing and local communities would enable better communication and add value to the Police service and minimise waste.

As there were no further questions the Chair announced that the meeting would move into a closed session so that the Panel could consider the appointment. It was noted that once a decision had been made it would be relayed to the Office of the PCC and would be publicised within the next 5 days.

Resolved: That, following the holding of a confirmation hearing in accordance with the requirements of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act, 2011 the appointment of Mr Ibrahim Master as the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire is approved.

6. Urgent Business

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

7. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Police and Crime Panel would be held at 10.00am on the 29th January 2013 in Meeting Room 'A' at the Town Hall, Blackburn.

Ian Fisher
Secretary to the Police and Crime Panel

Lancashire County Council
County Hall
Preston