

## **West Mercia Police and Crime Panel**

### **Tuesday, 19 June 2018, - 1.30 pm**

#### **Minutes**

#### **Present:**

Cllr Brian Wilcox (Chairman), Cllr Michael Wood (Vice Chairman), Cllr T Baker, Cllr Sebastian Bowen, Mrs Carole Clive, Cllr Roger Evans, Cllr S J Mackay, Cllr Gareth Prosser, Cllr Stephen Reynolds, Cllr James Stanley, Cllr Emma Stokes, Cllr C B Taylor and Colonel Tony Ward OBE

#### **Also attended:**

Anthony Bangham, Chief Constable, West Mercia Police  
John Campion, West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner  
Andy Champness, Office of the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner

Tim Rice (Senior Public Health Practitioner),  
Sheena Jones (Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager) and Samantha Morris (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)

#### **Available Papers**

The members had before them:

- A. The Agenda papers (previously circulated);
- B. The Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 February 2018 (previously circulated).

(A copy of document A will be attached to the signed Minutes).

#### **250 Welcome and Introductions**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Meeting, particularly the new Panel Members. The changes to the Substantive membership were:

- Gareth Prosser was replacing Joe Baker (Redditch)
- Tony Baker was replacing David Chambers (Malvern)
- James Stanley was replacing Mike Johnson (Worcester City)

Thanks were also recorded to all those members who had just left the Panel.

#### **251 Named Substitutes**

Councillor Kit Taylor was a named substitute for Councillor Karen May (Bromsgrove District Council).

**252 Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman advised the Panel that sadly Bill Longmore, the first Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia from November 2012 to May 2016 had passed away in May this year following a long battle with cancer.

The Panel was advised that the Home Secretary had approved the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC's) Business Case for taking on governance of fire and rescue services in West Mercia. The procedure had however been put on hold by the Home Office whilst Judicial Review challenges from the relevant Fire and Rescue Authorities were resolved. As a consequence of this, the Panel would be offered relevant training if required when the Judicial Review challenges had been resolved.

**253 Apologies and Declarations of Interest**

Apologies were received from Councillors Dakin, May, Mehta, Smith and Tremellen.

Declarations of interest were made as follows:

- Colonel Tony Ward was a member of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner's (OPCC's) Trust, Integrity and Ethics Committee
- Gareth Prosser was a retired Police Officer in receipt of a Police Pension
- Steve Mackay was a retired Police Officer in receipt of a Police Pension (not West Mercia Police).

**254 Public Participation**

None.

**255 Confirmation of the Minutes of the previous meeting**

The Chairman advised the Panel that objections had been received from the OPCC in respect of draft Minute number 245: Scrutiny of the Sale of Registration Plate AB1 and the Panel's Report which had subsequently been sent to the PCC. The Chairman confirmed that the minutes had been checked and verified and as a result one amendment had been made to the Report sent to the PCC. The Chairman reminded the Panel that the minutes were a record of what was discussed at the meeting.

Cllr Mackay advised that draft Minute 242: Apologies and Declarations of Interest was inaccurate as it referred to him as being a former Member of the West Mercia Police Authority and knowing Paul West, the former Chief Constable in a professional capacity. Cllr Mackay was not a previous member of the West Mercia Police authority and didn't know Paul West, the former West Mercia Chief Constable. Subject to this amendment, the

**256 Draft Annual Report of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia**

Minutes were otherwise agreed to be a correct record of the 6 February 2018 meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

The Panel was invited to consider the draft Annual Report of PCC for West Mercia and determine whether it would wish to make any recommendations to the PCC for consideration. The Report for 2017/18 provided a high-level overview of the PCC's work over the last financial year.

Under Section 12 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the PCC was required to report to the Police and Crime Panel on the exercise of his functions in each financial year. Specifically, the Annual Report should report on:

- a) the exercise of the PCC's functions in each financial year, and
- b) the progress which has been made in the financial year in meeting the police and crime objectives in the PCC's Police and Crime Plan.

In accordance with the Act, the Panel was required to review the Report and to make any recommendations to the PCC for consideration. The PCC must then respond to any report or recommendations that the Panel make prior to publishing the final version on the Report.

The PCC introduced the Report and circulated Neighbourhood Team profiles to the Panel for information. The PCC explained that the last year had built on the foundations set out in his first year in office continuing with the principles of: Putting victims first, and delivering a secure, reformed, reassured and ultimately safer West Mercia and highlighted examples from the Report.

During the discussion, the following main points were made:

- Body Worn Video (BWV) seemed to be giving local Police Officers greater confidence when carrying out their roles but it was too early to confirm whether the number of complaints received had reduced as a result
- It was confirmed that the Custody Suite in Leominster was not operational and that standards had changed since it had been built. The PCC however, was confident that there were sufficient Custody Suites in West Mercia

**257 Her Majesty's  
Inspectorate of  
Constabulary  
and Fire &  
Rescue  
Services  
(HMICFRS)  
Inspection  
Report: PEEL  
Police  
Effectiveness  
2017: An  
Inspection of  
West Mercia  
Police**

- Although plans had taken a long time to come to fruition, the PCC confirmed that progress was being made for a shared police and fire station in Hereford
- As mentioned earlier in the meeting, the PCC confirmed his commitment to filling and maintaining the PCSO posts
- The benefits of Smart Water were often not understood and it was important to continue promoting this
- Talks were at an advanced stage for a shared police and fire station in Redditch
- Reducing reoffending on more serious crime was complex, one example of work in this area was the Drive project in Worcestershire. This was a new response to tackling the behaviour of high risk domestic abuse perpetrators, using a one-to-one case management approach. Other services eg mental health were also allocating resources to this area
- It was suggested that the reference to the levels of recorded crime (page 3) was confusing to the reader when the proportions of crime were not given in the paragraph.

The Panel discussed the Report and the only recommendation made was for the PCC to consider prior to publishing the final version of the Report whether the levels of recorded crime (page 3) could be better identified by using performance data within the Report.

In March 2018, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published its inspection findings into Police Effectiveness as part of its annual rolling programme of inspections on the efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy of police forces within England and Wales (PEEL). A Report was published for each force alongside a National one. A copy of the West Mercia Inspection Report was circulated with the Agenda.

The PEEL Inspection Reports provided a judgement grade of 'outstanding', 'good' 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate'. Each force was given an overall grading as well as individual grades for each of the key areas which were subject to inspection in that year. The overall grading for West Mercia in the latest report was 'requires improvement'. The table below provided a summary of the grading for each area within the Inspection.

<b>Inspection area</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Preventing crime and ASB/ keeping people safe	Requires improvement
Investigating crime/managing offenders	Good*
Protecting vulnerable people/ supporting victims	Requires Improvement
Tackling serious and organised crime	Inadequate
Specialist capabilities	Ungraded
Overall	Requires improvement

\*This area was inspected as part of the 2016 inspection

The PCC advised the Panel that he and the Chief Constable were disappointed with the overall grading, particularly in respect of tackling serious and organised crime and a copy of the letter that he had sent to the Home Secretary was included in the Agenda for the Panel's reference. The letter set out the PCC's observations and actions on each of the areas raised by HMICFRS for improvement. Beneath these actions were clear plans and targets for improvement.

The PCC explained that he recognised and accepted the failings identified and now had a greater confidence that that there was a focus on the key areas. The PCC was continuing to hold the Chief Constable to account for the activity the Force was taking in response to the areas identified for further improvement and had changed the approach to the holding to account process and had also appointed specific points of contact for the Action Plan.

At the time of the Inspection, the West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police Alliance was undergoing a leadership review and had since appointed a shared Assistant Chief Constable with direct responsibility for shared functions across the Alliance. The New Assistant Chief Constable had the delivery of policing of serious and organised crime as a priority.

The Chief Constable outlined the background to the PEEL Inspection process and how serious and organised crime (which was one element of this), fitted into the process. West Mercia Police wasn't in the position it would have wanted to be in respect of this area but the Chief Constable was mindful that the Force was doing a lot of good work, but unfortunately not able to demonstrate and evidence this in a consistent way. There was now a West Mercia Improvement Plan in place which addressed all of the areas identified for

improvement by the HMICFRS.

The Chief Constable highlighted the importance of recognising that the central Leadership Strategy, although a good Strategy wasn't working at an operational level for the Alliance due to the differing operational needs of the two Police Forces. As mentioned earlier, the new shared Assistant Constable with direct responsibility for shared functions had been appointed to rectify this.

During the discussion, the following main points were made:

- It was noted that HMICFRS had inspected the two Forces (West Mercia and Warwickshire) as an Alliance but had then given separate gradings. In future, it had been agreed with the Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI's) that there would be separate Inspections. This would enable the differences in scale of operation between the two forces to be taken into account and more accurately reflected
- In response to the concern raised about the lack of succession planning in West Mercia Police, the PCC explained that the Inspection covered only a small part of a very complex business not the organisation as a whole. Succession planning was an area of investment but it was worth noting that there was a limited supply of officers interested in police leadership
- In the area of *Improve Service to Vulnerable People around Delayed Attendance and Reassessment of Risk*, an Action Plan to deal with un-resourced incidents had been introduced. This would ensure that all incidents were managed appropriately and dealt with in a timely manner. It was confirmed that the Operational Control Room Supervisors carried out the assessment of these cases
- It was confirmed that the Safer Neighbourhood Teams in West Mercia were being protected and PCSO numbers would remain the same with recruitment as necessary to fill vacancies. West Mercia Police were also working with the College of Policing and Durham Police to develop a new problem solving approach
- In order to meet the demand of local communities, there would be a greater emphasis on a more bespoke service with greater flexibility, rather than a one size fits all approach
- It was noted that detection rates in West Mercia

weren't in line with crime reporting and although it was important for these rates to increase, it should not be at expense of the victim's wishes

- There were currently 240 PCSO's, which the PCC assured the Panel would remain a constant throughout his tenure
- A concern was raised about the impact of the Inspection on PCC's reputation, particularly in respect of the applications for Judicial Review (JR) of the fire governance decision. The PCC pointed out that the applications for the JR were from Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service and not a JR of the PCC. The JR would consider how the decision was made not the outcome of the decision. The PCC was however, concerned about the wider reputational element of the situation and would hope not to be judged on how the situation was but how the Service had improved
- It was confirmed that the areas for inspection were decided by HMICFRS, who would then disengage, when they were content with progress made. It was likely that the next stage of the process may be known by October
- The next formal Inspection would be January 2019 and it was possible to have a 3 year period where an area wasn't examined
- As a result of the Force's inability to clarify how it monitored the actions officers and staff took when responding to domestic abuse incidents and how it assessed the effectiveness of its response, a new ICT system was being introduced imminently to improve interpretation of data. The point was made that if there was confidence in the IT, this would free up valuable resources currently being spent on data assurance. The Panel would like an update on this system in 6 months' time
- It was suggested that it would be helpful if position statements were prepared for all 14 potential areas of inspection in readiness for any future HMICFRS Inspection. The PCC advised that this was the aim but was not yet complete and robust enough. The point was made that it would be helpful to know where in each of the bands grades each assessment was which would allow the PCC to gauge performance more accurately.

It was agreed the Panel would receive an update on progress against the Action Plan and ICT system for data interpretation in November 2018.

**258**      **Police & Crime  
Plan Activity  
and  
Performance  
Monitoring  
Report (January  
2018 - March  
2018)**

The Panel was invited to consider the Police & Crime Plan Activity and Performance Monitoring Report for January 2018-March 2018 and determine whether it would wish to carry out any further scrutiny or make any comments.

The PCC in introducing the Report to the Panel highlighted that the next holding to account session with the Chief Constable on 26 June (10.30am) would be live on Facebook and would be the first public holding to account session. The PCC commended the Report to the Panel.

During the discussion, the following main points were made:

- It was confirmed that 'Track my Crime' which would be part of the IT System Athena would be part of Phase 2, but as yet there was no date of implementation
- There was no target for the number of Special Constables, but it was important to encourage as much interest as possible
- The PCC was commended on Appendix 2 of the Report, which was simple and understandable
- In response to the suggestion that it would be helpful if more detail could be provided around road traffic collisions, the PCC explained that some detail was available in the wider report and that the Safer Roads Partnership also supported this area.

**259**      **The National  
Association of  
Police, Fire and  
Crime Panels**

In September 2017, the Panel considered options for establishing national representation for Police and Crime Panels. The Panel considered that a Special Interest Group within the LGA would be the most appropriate.

An inaugural meeting of interested Panels was held in April 2018 at which it was agreed to form a National Association. John Gili-Ross from Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel, was elected as Chairman and he had written to all Panel Chairmen setting out further details including its terms of reference (letter enclosed in the Agenda). An application to form a Special Interest Group of the LGA had been submitted and it was hoped, this would be considered at the June LGA Board meeting.

The Panel agreed that the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel would join the National Association of Police, Fire

**260 Election of Chairman**

and Crime Panels at a membership fee for the first year of £500.

Cllr Wilcox was standing down as Chairman following his term of office. On behalf of the Panel, Cllr Wood thanked Cllr Wilcox for leading the Panel for the last 3 years.

Cllr Steve Mackay was proposed and seconded as Chairman. There being no other nominees, Cllr Mackay was duly elected Chairman of the Panel for 3 years and took the Chair.

**261 Election of Vice-Chairman**

There was now a vacancy for Vice-Chairman. Cllr Michael Wood was proposed and seconded as Vice-Chairman. There were no other nominees.

Cllr Wood was appointed as Vice-Chairman for 3 years.

The meeting ended at 3.50 pm

Chairman .....