

West Mercia Police and Crime Panel

Thursday, 30 November 2017, - 1.30 pm

Minutes

Present:

Cllr Brian Wilcox (Chairman), Cllr Sebastian Bowen, Cllr David Chambers, Mrs Carole Clive, Cllr Roger Evans, Cllr M Johnson, Cllr Karen May, Cllr Rajash Mehta, Cllr A P Miller, Cllr Stephen Reynolds, Cllr Juliet Smith, Cllr Emma Stokes, Cllr Dave Tremellen, Colonel Tony Ward OBE and Cllr Michael Wood

Also attended:

John Campion, West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner
Tracey Onslow, Deputy Police and 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 26 September 2017 (previously circulated).

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

233 Welcome and Introductions

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Meeting.

234 Named Substitutes

The named substitutes were:

Cllr Tony Miller for Cllr Stephen Mackay (Worcestershire County Council)
Cllr Dave Tremellen for Cllr Kevin Turley (Shropshire County Council)

235 Apologies and Declarations of Interest

Apologies were received from Councillors Dakin, Mackay and Turley.

A declaration of interest was made by Colonel Tony Ward who was a Member of the Trust, Integrity and Ethics Committee.

236 Public Participation

None.

237 Confirmation of the Minutes of the previous meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 September 2017 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The Chairman confirmed that the Police and Crime Commissioner had submitted a full business case to Government on the governance of local fire arrangements. As the four Principal Authorities were opposed to the PCCs Proposal, an independent assessment was being carried out by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). It was envisaged that the results of the assessment would be reported back to the Home Office in the New Year.

238 Police & Crime Plan Activity and Performance Monitoring Report (July 2017-September 2017)

The Panel was invited to consider the Police & Crime Plan Activity and Performance Monitoring Report (July-September 2017), determine whether it would wish to carry out any further scrutiny or make any comments.

The Chairman referred to the previous meeting's discussion regarding the Panel's requested to include a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rating on the summary page and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) confirmed that this was in hand and would be in place for the next meeting.

In presenting the report, the PCC and the Deputy PCC (DPCC) highlighted:

- that it was pleasing to see that in respect of public confidence, the latest figures released by the Crime Survey for England and Wales showed that public confidence in West Mercia Police had increased in the past two years from 75.3% in June 2015 to 80.7% in June this year, the highest since the alliance with Warwickshire Police. The survey also showed that public confidence in West Mercia Police was above the national average (78.7%). This increase in confidence had resulted in a considerable improvement in ranking from 8th to 4th in its most similar family group. The PCC was now looking at how this improvement could be sustained and how the aspiration to be top of the most similar group could be achieved

- the vast majority of frontline officers and staff across West Mercia were now equipped with body worn video (BWV). Phase 2 scoping was underway to advise on costs of expanding BWV to other areas such as CID and West Mercia Central Motorway Policing Group (CMPG) staff
- officers across West Mercia were now equipped with smartphones and laptops, enabling them to work on the move and spend more time with the public. As officers no longer had to frequently return to police stations to do admin work, on average, an extra hour per officer per shift was being spent out and about in the community
- in respect of the Perpetrator Programme - The Drive Project was a new response to domestic abuse that aimed to reduce the number of child and adult victims of domestic abuse by deterring perpetrator behaviour. In April 2017, the Drive Partnership, in collaboration with 5 PCCs including West Mercia submitted a proposal to the Police Transformation Fund for three years of funding to deliver Drive. At the beginning of November the government confirmed that £2.86m had been awarded to the project. The amount awarded was significantly lower than the bid submitted and work was now underway to determine how best the project could be effectively delivered locally. The aim was to work with 100 perpetrators per year and as Worcestershire was the highest area of domestic abuse, it would be the Pilot for the scheme which would eventually be rolled out to other areas
- that previously there had been an ad-hoc approach to CCTV, which consequently meant that there was an inequality of service across West Mercia. The PCC had signed off a new policy for CCTV to ensure that up to £65,000 per year could be given to each of the five Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) across West Mercia to be used on new and improved CCTV equipment until March 2020. Each CSP had been asked to work with their local policing teams and communities to ensure a more joined-up approach. They would each submit an application detailing the areas of need and where they believed the cameras should be placed, or which cameras need to be upgraded. Match funding was required. The PCC was also looking to develop a purchasing framework for CCTV to ensure value for money, if it was not possible for the CSPs to get a better value deal locally

- it was difficult to demonstrate that monitoring of CCTV was value for money so whilst the benefits or otherwise were being evidenced, the PCC had agreed to honour existing commitments but not enter into any new arrangements, this was in line with PCCs from most similar groups except for Warwickshire PCC.

During the discussion, the following main points were made:

- In response to the points put forward by Councillor Miller as substitute for Councillor Mackay, it was confirmed that the £1m investment in CCTV was across all CSPs and was a slight uplift on the previous total funding pot. The funding would be provided until the end of March 2020 and the PCC would honour existing monitoring arrangements
- It was confirmed that the new CCTV cameras were not at the moment linked to enable CSPs to be part of a central monitoring unit. It was, however the PCCs vision for all CCTV to be linked to the Operational Control Centre (OCC) at Hindlip, so that call handlers when taking a 101 or 999 calls would be able to see and access CCTV if it was available. The purchasing Framework would also provide for compatible kit
- There was an acknowledgment that in the current times of austerity, Council's would struggle to source revenue streams for the monitoring of CCTV. The DPCC gave the example of Telford who were looking at a Volunteer Scheme to bring down costs and also made the point that the £65k PCC funding was match funded which should be achievable for Councils as many were currently paying out in excess of £250,000. The PCC had a vision for a West Mercia wide CCTV and he believed that capital investment in CCTV could help to bring down monitoring costs. In Oswestry for example capital investment had helped to offset the running costs
- The PCC confirmed that there was nothing relevant to West Mercia in respect of the HMICFS Report on the Abuse of Authority
- The PCC confirmed that he was confident that the Stop and Search Scheme was being used effectively and legitimately and that he had held the Chief Constable to account in his holding to account sessions
- In response to a question the PCC reported that the 3 top issues for him were:

- firstly to make sure that the Police were there in times of emergency; and
 - of equal importance was focusing on the causes of crime eg perpetrators and prolific victims and the national contribution to Policing UK
- The point was made that the lack of public confidence for less serious issues was a concern. The PCC confirmed that an efficient way for public to get in touch with the Police ie an efficient telephone service for both 101 and 999 calls was a focus and that he was aware that community issues were high in people's expectations but also the community had a role to play too
 - The Panel was pleased to see that public confidence in West Mercia Police had improved from 8th to 4th place. DCC Blakeman was working on a Confidence Strategy, which the Panel would wish to consider in due course
 - The PCC confirmed that he was satisfied that there was sufficient trained officers and resources to cope with crime trends but that he was less confident that there were relevant skills sets to solve some of the underlying problems that caused some spikes in crimes
 - Re-offending rates were higher in West Mercia than in the West Midlands and the performance of the community rehabilitation and rehabilitation service for high risk offenders was of concern also; the PCC had written to the Prison Minister on a couple of occasions to voice his concerns. A significant amount of resources was being spent in this area and the PCC advised that there needed to be a joined up strategy and approach. The PCC was pleased that there had been some changes to the community rehabilitation company in West Mercia, which would hopefully result in some improvements
 - The DPCC pointed out that education was of equal importance and that she was looking at intergenerational offending
 - Although it was acknowledged that domestic abuse was still increasing, it was pleasing to note that there was an increased confidence in both reporting and recording this crime
 - It was noted vehicle crime and bicycle theft was increasing in line with national trends. The PCC whilst acknowledging the increase thought that communities had a responsibility to secure their vehicles and bikes and pointed out that the Police response would be proportionate to the crime

- It was suggested that the increase in the number of road traffic casualties required a multi-faceted response to improve the situation from the Police, Highways England and County Councils
- When West Midlands Police had a crack-down on a certain type of crime, the West Mercia policing area was likely to experience the knock on effect of this and see a spike in that type of crime. This was a known effect but the PCC reassured the Panel that there was good collaboration between West Mercia Police and West Midlands Police and that in order to improve the situation some of the bigger issues of society such as worklessness and homelessness needed to be tackled
- The average percentage of hours lost to sickness had increased for both officers and staff. The PCC advised that this was on his radar and he was holding the Chief Constable to account on this and monitoring the trends over a 12 month period
- It was noted the time taken to record complaints was below target, the PCC explained that he was confident that this had improved and that complaints were being recorded in the relevant timescales
- The PCC monitored the performance of West Mercia Police by carrying out a formal holding to account process with the Chief Constable and planned to develop this further in the new year by looking at more at trends. He also considered a weekly performance dash board of key crimes to ensure that a spike in a crime didn't become a trend and that appropriate action was taken in a timely way
The PCC recognised early on his term of office that burglary victims didn't get a good service. There was now a burglary standard in place to ensure an agreed service level which included appropriate visits and advice
- It was noticed that as of April 2017, the Home Office classification for domestic burglary changed to residential burglary. This revision now included all offences in sheds and outbuildings located within the curtilage of the property, as long as the use of the building was residential and not commercial. Previously these offences would have been classified as burglary other building. It was therefore expected that there would be a higher volume of residential burglary offences compared to the previous domestic burglary classification. In order to provide a clearer

**239 Her Majesty's
Inspectorate of
Constabulary
and Fire &
Rescue
Services
(HMICFS)
Inspection
Report - 'Stolen
Freedom: the
Policing
Response to
Modern Slavery
and Human
Trafficking'**

comparison to previous data, a subset of residential burglary (Residential Burglary – Dwelling) had been created which only incorporated the criteria of the old domestic burglary classification i.e. excluding those offences targeting sheds and outbuildings.

- Information sharing and collaboration between partners was working well but there was always room for improvement.

The Panel was invited to consider Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Inspection Report - 'Stolen Freedom: The Policing Response to Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking', determine whether it would wish to carry out any further scrutiny or make any comments

The PCC's report gave an overview of the current approach taken by West Mercia Police to address modern day slavery and human trafficking (MSHT) and outlined the proposed response to the recommendations set out in HMICFRS' recent report.

During the discussion, the following main points were made:

- The PCC confirmed that he was confident that West Mercia Police were doing the right things in this area and making the links with Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCU) which had national links. There was also a local awareness of the types of business where this was prone
- The DPCC advised that some work was being carried out with CSP's in respect of the analysts function and problem profiling to help CSP's understand the problems in their areas
- As well as the crime implications, it was also important to consider industry in a broader sense and the safeguards which could be put in place to minimise the occurrence
- Individuals in communities also had a responsibility to be vigilant report any suspicions
- It was suggested that it would be helpful if Worcestershire Regulatory Services were part of Worcestershire Office of Data Analytics (WODA) Agreement – Cllr May as Worcestershire County Council's Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Commissioning and Transformation agreed to follow this issue up.

It was agreed that the Panel would receive an annual update on this area unless the PCC had any concerns prior to this.

In closing the Meeting, the Chairman reminded the Panel that the next meeting was to be held on Tuesday, 6th February 2018.

The meeting ended at 2.50 pm

Chairman