

West Mercia Police and Crime Panel

Tuesday, 8 December 2015, County Hall, Worcester. 2pm.

Minutes

Present:

Cllr Brian Wilcox (Chairman), Mrs Helen Barker, Cllr Charlotte Barnes, Cllr Sebastian Bowen, Cllr Pauline Dee, Cllr P Grove, Cllr I Hardiman, Cllr Paul Middlebrough, Cllr A P Miller (Vice Chairman), Cllr Stephen Reynolds, Cllr Hilda Rhodes, Cllr A C Roberts, Cllr Margaret Sherrey, Cllr Yvonne Smith, Colonel Tony Ward OBE and Cllr Michael Wood

Also attended:

DCC Bangham, Glyn Edwards, Elizabeth Hall, Barrie Sheldon, Rod Reynolds, Helen Roberts Suzanne O'Leary, Timothy Rice and Kate Griffiths.

137 Welcome and Introductions

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked representatives from the Police and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for attending for the Chief Constable and the PCC as they were at a meeting with the Home Secretary.

138 Named Substitutes

Cllr. Ian Hardiman attended for Cllr. Sally Chambers.

139 Apologies and Declarations of Interest

Apologies had been received from Cllr. Sally Chambers, Andy Champness, Bill Longmore, Keith Roberts and David Shaw.

Declarations of Interest were made by: Cllr. Phil Grove who was in receipt of a police pension; Col. Tony Ward who was member of the Trust, Integrity and Ethics Committee and Helen Barker who was a Trustee of the Youth Support Service.

140 Public Participation

None.

141 Confirmation of the Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes were declared to be a correct record of the previous meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

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The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) explained that the Chancellor's announcement that the

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policing budget would not be reduced was welcomed but that exact amounts would not be known until the end of next week. Some cuts would still be necessary but would be achieved through the current plan.

Details of the 4 objectives the Panel wished to examine were given in the agenda report.

During the discussion the following main points were made:

Objective 2 - Alcohol and Violent Crime

It was confirmed that there was a spike in the Violence against the person with injury figures which was partly due to changes in recording practices following the HMIC crime data integrity inspection. There would need to be a new benchmark established at the new higher level. The Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) explained that they were taking advice on how to record earlier crimes which were reported along with a current crime.

The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) was working well in Hereford; Worcestershire's MASH was in place but only recently established and Telford and Shropshire's were imminent. The new Police IT system would help make improvements and ensure value for money and would further improve joint working with social services.

Objective 3 – Reduce the harm caused by drugs

The Drugs Strategy had three main aims: To reduce supply, reduce demand and reduce harm. The Deputy PCC felt that early intervention, education and prevention were the key to reducing demand. Outreach and Youth Workers had a key role in going into schools and there was also a role for parents. One panel member felt that education about drugs needed to start at an earlier age.

Panel members also felt that the public needed to play their part in reporting suspicious events. The Deputy Chief Constable agreed that the police could be more effective with help from the community and organisations such as the fire service and it was important for the police to believe they could make a difference in the fight against drugs and be ready to adapt to changing circumstances such as dealing with legal highs.

It was felt that the 200 who were drug tested on arrest was not a very high number as it was known that a high percentage of crimes involved drugs in some way. It was

agreed that collaborative working was the way forward and then, once people had got into treatment programmes, the issues of how to make the treatments more effective and how to keep people in treatment were being looked at.

Panel Members were impressed with the Cadets who went into schools in Herefordshire, which was important as youth services had been severely reduced or scrapped in Shropshire. The Deputy PCC agreed they were excellent role models and explained that interim funding was being supplied to Shropshire to help with some of the gaps in youth support.

It was clarified that any information gained about suppliers during drug driving arrests was passed onto the relevant officers, but they were dealt with separately. The highlighting of drug driving was due to new legislation which brought it into line with drink driving procedures. It may appear as if drug problems were increasing but it was clarified that this was because they were being more closely investigated and the more you investigate the more you find.

Objective 6 – Business and Rural Crime

The Office for National Statistics now included cyber-crime in its national crime figures and both cyber and rural crime needed to be targeted with education and prevention. People needed to be more aware of how they could become the victim of crime and guard against it. The police had conducted farm walkabouts to make farmers aware of risk and Cleobury Mortimer had become the first smart water town. There were also Stop that thief schemes and safer neighbourhood schemes.

The DCC felt that it was important to have the correct definition for rural crime to ensure they are not a crime that just happens to take place in a rural area. They take crimes such as theft of fish or poaching seriously because they understood that such crimes affected people's livelihoods. The correct term for cyber-crime was cyber enabled crime and could be part of lots of other crimes.

The figures which matched all available resources and personnel and every crime had been mapped as part of the StraDA programme and this had enabled the police to see if staff were working in the correct areas.

Objective 9 - Safer Roads Partnership

Rod Reynolds gave a presentation and explained that the Partnership, which included County Councils, Fire and Rescue Services, the Courts and the NHS, worked to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on the roads. The County Council had withdrawn its funding but the partnership was still operating and was still effective. Over the past five years the number of collisions had been generally reducing but that would flatten out as there were more cars on the roads.

The causes of collisions causing casualties were recorded and in over 50% of cases speed was a contributing factor, and they were now recording the involvement of drugs, whether legal medication or not; there were also a high number of motorcycle accidents on bikes over 500cc in older men in Shropshire.

Road Safety was being tackled in three areas – engineering, education and enforcement.

- Engineering was largely down to Local Authorities and their contractors, along with Traffic Management Advisors,
- Education was very important and various programmes were being used such as Green Light which was the flagship programme for 16-24 year olds which provided hard hitting input and focused on providing information via apps and social media. Some events concentrated on motorbike safety such as Biker Down, Bike4Life and Take Control. Road Safety Officers had also set up Cycle Safety Stations to advise cyclists on being seen in the dark and gave away reflectors.
- Enforcement involved programmes to help address speeding. Sites or routes could be assessed and speed enforcement brought in if appropriate. The Community Concern Programme involved local volunteers being trained to monitor speeds in their areas.

Any money made from speed awareness courses had to be used by the Safer Roads Partnership which helped to make the Partnership self-sufficient – apart from Green Light which received funding from Local Authorities.

In the ensuing discussion the following main points were made:

- Councillors were concerned about the issue of very large tractors causing problems on local roads,
- Shropshire Council had provided some funding to enable the Safer Roads Partnership to work with

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driving instructors and such initiatives were spreading,

- It was suggested that Partner Organisations could get together to do a Scrutiny on Road Safety which could perhaps involve looking at any accidents which occurred as a result to changes to roundabouts,
- In response to a query about whether the Safer Roads Partnership could make recommendations at planning meetings for new housing developments, it was clarified that the Highways department were responsible for speed limits and the Chief Constable was a statutory consultee,
- The Safer Roads Partnership were happy to attend Parish Council Meetings if Parish Councillors had particular concerns in their area.

Glyn Edwards, Head of Commissioning for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner gave a presentation to update the panel about the Community Safety Partnership Commissioning Framework.

The framework was an agreement between all partners that would allow for a longer term approach to delivering against need rather than having 12 month grants to the CSP. This would provide a collaborative approach and value for money.

The Partnership was analysing levels and patterns of crimes and looking at existing projects. This information was then being mapped and plotted against population and crime trends to ensure that funding was being targeted to areas of greatest need.

Scorecards were used to collect information on a range of topics and showed outcomes and indicators, baselines, the current situation and what could be done better. The domestic violence scorecard was shown as an example.

The next steps were for CSP clinics to be held to assess the scorecards and recommendations would be produced by the end of December 2015. Data sets (for example from the NHS) and training in the use of the heat maps would be made available to the CSPs and then programmes linked to crime trends and priorities would be developed from February 2016 onwards.

In response to questions Mr Edwards clarified that:

- There was now one CSP in the north of Worcestershire and one in the south.
- The heat maps would be available to the public

and it was felt that this would be helpful as it would allow parish councillors to be more knowledgeable and any discussions with public safety officers would be more informed.

The Chairman mentioned that Suzanne was leaving her role as Governance and Scrutiny Manager at Worcestershire County Council for a new position with the Government Ombudsman. He thanked her for her work with the Police and Crime Panel and wished her well in her new job.

The Chairman noted that the next meeting of the Panel would be on:

2 February at County Hall, Worcester. Starting at 1.30pm.

There would be meetings of the Task and Finish Groups looking at the Precept and the Police and Crime Plan before the next main meeting of the Panel.

The meeting ended at 4.10pm.

Chairman