

HAMPSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Friday, 29th January, 2021 at 10.00 am
Held virtually

Councillors:

Chairman

p David Stewart
(Isle of Wight Council)

Vice Chairman

p Jan Warwick
(Hampshire County Council)

p Diane Andrews
(New Forest District Council)

p Lee Hunt
(Portsmouth City Council)

p Narinder Bains
(Havant Borough Council)

p Phillip Lashbrook
(Test Valley Borough Council)

p John Beavis MBE
(Gosport Borough Council)

a David McKinney
(East Hampshire District Council)

p Simon Bound
(Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council)

p Ken Muschamp
(Rushmoor Borough Council)

p Trevor Cartwright MBE
(Fareham Borough Council)

p James Radley
(Hart District Council)

a Tonia Craig
(Eastleigh Borough Council)

p Dave Shields
(Southampton City Council)

p Lisa Griffiths
(Winchester County Council)

Co-opted Members:

Independent Members

p Michael Coombes
p Bob Purkiss MBE

Local Authority

p Tony Jones
p Brian Laming
p Lynne Stagg

At the invitation of the Chairman:

Peter Baulf
Michael Lane
James Payne

Legal Advisor to the Panel
Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire
Chief Executive, Office of the Police and Crime
Commissioner
Chief Constable, Hampshire Constabulary

Olivia Pinkney

288. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from:

- Councillor Tonia Craig, Eastleigh Borough Council
- Councillor David McKinney, East Hampshire District Council

289. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were able to disclose to the meeting any disclosable pecuniary interest they may have in any matter on the agenda for the meeting, where that interest is not already entered in their appointing authority's register of interests, and any other pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in any such matter that Members may wish to disclose.

No declarations were made.

290. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes from the 2 October 2020 meeting were confirmed as a correct record.

291. QUESTIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

No questions or deputations were received by the Panel on this occasion.

292. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

In November, the Chairman, along with Members of the Panel and a supporting officer, joined the National Conference for Police and Crime Panels. Across a three-day virtual event, updates were heard on matters of national interest, policy and governance as well best practice from Panels across the Country. During the event it was observed that the Hampshire Police and Crime Panel and its work was well regarded at a national level.

The Chairman thanked the Commissioner and his team for arranging a recent briefing for Members of the Panel, providing an update on the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) and developments to the Interact system. Members also heard a briefing on local policing from ACC Maggie Blyth.

The Chairman noted the outcome of recent investigation and misconduct proceedings, taken against officers from the Serious and Organised Crime Unit, based within the Northern Police Investigation Centre. It was heard that the Panel's newly formed Equality and Diversity Sub Group would be working alongside the Commissioner and his team to scrutinise the organisational response taken to address the concerns identified and would seek assurance that such conduct would not be tolerated in the future within Hampshire Constabulary.

293. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair invited announcements from the Commissioner.

It was heard that, approximately two years ago, the PCC had challenged the Chief Constable to review culture, morale and ethics within the force and root out any concerns of inappropriate views or behaviours. The Commissioner noted that the Chief Constable had taken a very proactive approach to this work,

alongside her senior management, with the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) recently complimenting the management and internal processes in this matter. The unacceptable behaviour of a few officers, who had been subject to investigation and misconduct hearings, was to be condemned, and the Panel heard reassurance from the Commissioner of the openness and visibility at every level of the Constabulary to ensure such a situation would not happen again in the future.

The Commissioner commented upon the challenges faced over the last year and the losses suffered by communities as well as within the force, whose achievements throughout the year in keeping residents safer were recognised.

294. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER - 2021/22 PRECEPT

The Commissioner introduced his proposed precept for 2021/22, which recommended a proposed increase of £15 per month for Band D properties.

In setting the budget and precept, Members heard that the Commissioner had considered the operational context from the Chief Constable, immediate financial demands and the needs of communities and partners. The Commissioner had also given regard to the direction of national government and the ability of Hampshire to work within that context.

A question was raised by the Panel in advance of the meeting regarding affordability for residents and the justifications for an increase to the precept when the force had been regarded as well performing and value for money by the inspectorate. The Commissioner explained that the financial impact of the pandemic both upon residents and on public funds was of key consideration, with a number of precept scenarios modelled, to determine which would deliver the greatest value to residents and communities across the policing area. Outlined within the proposed budget was support to enable more officers to join the force more quickly as part of the central government uplift programme, expanding the Safer Streets initiative to Basingstoke and Portsmouth and investment in tackling rural crime. Also noted was the underfunding of the Constabulary through the Police Funding Formula, with the Commissioner continuing to lobby central government for a fairer funding formula.

Members heard that the proposed increase had been supported by both officer and staff representative organisations, as well as receiving endorsement from the Chief Constable and public consultation showing majority support for the proposal presented.

The Chief Constable was invited by the Commissioner to provide Members with an operational context for the budget. Members heard that:

- The unacceptable behaviours identified within the Serious and Organised Crime Unit had been raised through the Constabulary's Whistleblowing Policy and had been dealt with swiftly following the report. The Chief Constable was clear that in response to any such situations the Constabulary would be decisive and take appropriate action. The Chief Constable welcomed the opportunity to work with the Panel's Equality and Diversity Working Group in this regard.

- The Constabulary was a good organisation with highly performing officers and staff but more were needed to meet demand and deliver better outcomes for the residents of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The budget proposed would enable the Constabulary to take the fight to criminals and the Chief Constable's professional view was that supporting an increase any lower, than that proposed, would conflict with operational evidence. The Chief Constable was confident that the difference the budget would bring to communities would be felt and would be tangible.
- The Panel's scrutiny of the budget was welcomed as part of the process in enabling every public pound to be spent wisely.
- New pressures had arisen following the outbreak of the pandemic. The force had worked hard to keep residents safe through challenging times and with changes to ways of working including the introduction of Covid compliance patrols. There had been a 50% increase in the level of children at risk referrals following the first national lockdown, alongside a 50% increase in the volume of work undertaken by the Child Abuse Internet Team. Elder abuse and fraud had increased and domestic abuse reports had grown significantly nationwide. Court backlogs, driven by the pandemic, had a significant impact on victims and witnesses with increased resourcing needed to meet the required standards of victim and witness care.
- Central government uplift funding would enable the recruitment of an additional 146 police officers in 2021/22 as well as a further 7 to join the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU). Members heard these would be an increase to the existing establishment and these figures represented new roles, not replacement for any in-year attrition. The proposed precept would allow the force to bring forward a further 50 officers from the year three allocation of uplift officers and enable all new officers to be properly trained and equipped. In addition the budget enabled Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) to be maintained at current numbers.
- Officer and staff wellbeing throughout the pandemic and beyond was core to the delivery of an effective service and further investment was planned for the wellbeing programme, which had already cut officer sickness levels by 6000 days.
- The budget outlined a number of enhanced operational targets, including the arrest of 300 more of the most dangerous criminals targeting residents and communities, including those running county drug lines, and enhanced approaches to tackle drug related crime. Members heard that Operation Monument had already successfully removed £1000's worth of drugs and weapons off the street and had helped vulnerable people impacted by these crimes.

The Commissioner then presented further information on the proposed precept. Members heard that:

- Public consultation undertaken regarding the proposed precept demonstrated a majority support for the increase. Very few responses from residents were uncertain, with most giving a strong view for or against.
- The Commissioner and his team had met with the Finance Working Group throughout the preparation for the precept proposal, their input and

scrutiny had been welcomed, including their ongoing review of the Commissioner's reserve profile.

Members heard an update from the Chairman of the Finance Working Group on activity undertaken by the working group on the lead into the precept setting. It was heard that the working group had reviewed proposed scenarios for the budget and precept level as they were being developed and two Members of the working group had observed the online public consultation events. It was recognised that the response to the public consultation had been the highest to date and that the PCC had undertaken a higher level of public engagement around the precept increase than seen in other PCC areas. The working group had been satisfied in their scrutiny of the process undertaken to set the proposed budget and precept, but had raised concerns over the question of affordability at each stage.

The Chairman reminded Members that the proposal being considered was that the Police and Crime Panel support the Police and Crime Commissioner's proposed precept increase of £15 per annum for Band D properties, which was the equivalent of £1.25 per month, or 29p per week. The Chairman then moved to invite questions from Members. In response to questions it was heard that:

- Affordability for residents was a key consideration from the very start of the budget analysis. The Commissioner was conscious of the economic impact of the pandemic upon residents, highlighting that the budget recognised a shortfall in council tax collections, for those households unable to meet the cost of council tax in the coming year as a result of financial hardship. Public consultation had suggested that there were many residents who could and would be willing to meet the additional cost of the precept to enable the police to do more and to fill gaps in service which would be left by only maintaining the status quo.
- The Commissioner would monitor the outcomes of any increased funding through the precept to ensure evident improved visibility and support for local communities. A record of this would be passed onto the next PCC, providing them with the checks and controls needed to take this monitoring forward.
- The Commissioner was clear that he would not make any decisions he himself would not be happy to receive and that plans were in place to enable an effective handover to the next PCC and enable continuity into the next PCC's term. The refreshed Police and Crime Plan would run into 2022, and had been adapted to meet the changing environment created by the pandemic.
- The Commissioner had undertaken more than 20 hours of personal engagement with the Chief Constable and pledged 100's of staff hours to ensure that the budget proposals would be focused on the priorities of local communities, alongside meeting operational policing demand.
- Resources would be targeted where the risk of threat and harm was greatest, with proportionate responses to keep people safer, whilst ensuring a fair distribution across the force area.
- During the pandemic the Commissioner had sought to enable police officers and staff to have everything possible to keep them safe whilst at work, including through appropriate use of reserves, and additionally had

implemented a number of short £500 funding grant rounds to help the community mitigate impacts felt from the outbreak of Covid-19.

- A data analyst had been recruited for the OPCC to specifically target information to those communities who don't regularly engage with the PCC and his office and who were noted to be under-represented in consultations. The most recent COMPASS session had a particular focus upon questions from the public and information to enhance the public's understanding of the role of the Commissioner had been shared in easily accessible formats.
- The Commissioner and his team would ensure residents had visibility of how their contributions through the precept would be spent, with communications throughout the year highlighting progress made.
- The Commissioner and his team would continue to provide the Panel's working groups with detailed information on the progress against Police Officer recruitment throughout the year. Uplift targets for 2021/21, as well as the additional recruitment to bring the Constabulary up to establishment, were well on track to deliver ahead of the end of the year, with some recruitment from year two brought forward.

Following questions, the Chairman moved to debate. Members discussed the precept proposal, noting that the spending outlined would protect the public from risk and harm and provide a real opportunity to enhance policing across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight . Members however expressed concern over monitoring the visible increase in officer numbers and the potential impact on residents in meeting the increased cost, with many financially impacted by the pandemic. The role of the Panel and it's working groups was recognised in monitoring how the outcomes of the proposed budget, if agreed, were delivering value for money to the public. The Panel further identified a need for greater public awareness of the level of work being undertaken 'behind the scenes' and how this supported the delivery of effective policing.

The Chairman repeated the recommendation proposed which was to support the Commissioner's proposed precept of £15 per annum for Band D properties, alongside the recommendations outlined in paragraphs 1.2 to 1.6 of the report.

A vote took place on the endorsement of the proposed increase to the policing precept, which was agreed unanimously by all Members present. The Chairman advised that the Panel's working groups would monitor progress of the budget to identify how and when commitments pledged through the budget proposal would be delivered.

RESOLVED:

That the Police and Crime Panel (PCP) support the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) proposed precept increase of £15 per annum for Band D properties, which is the equivalent of £1.25 per month, or 29p per week.

The Panel note the recommendations from the Chief Constable to the PCC on her operational requirements for 2021/22 onwards, and her request that the PCC support a precept increase of £15 to enable the delivery of those requirements, as set out in Appendix A.

The Panel note that 61% of households across Hampshire and the IOW are in properties in council tax bands A-C (see paragraph 7.14), and would therefore see a precept increase of less than £15 per annum if the above recommendation is supported.

The Panel note that the full precept increase will be utilised in support of local policing.

The Panel note the proposals in this report which ensure that for 2021/22 there will be significant investment in policing within Hampshire Constabulary Policing area, including an increase in police officer numbers by 146 above the existing budgeted establishment as part of the second tranche of the Government's commitment to increase police officer numbers nationally by 20,000.

The Panel note that the PCC has undertaken a broad range of consultation over the course of the last year to determine the public support for a precept increase, and that the overall collective outcome of the consultation shows that there is majority support for a precept increase.

The Chair paused the meeting for a 10-minute comfort break, suspending the meeting from 12:20 to 12:30. Cllr Radley left the meeting at this point.

295. **POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER - POLICE AND CRIME PLAN DELIVERY**

Members received an update on delivery against the Police and Crime Plan 2020-2022. The Panel heard that:

- The Commissioner and his team had applied focus on providing additional support, through working with partners, for victims of domestic abuse and children who were victims of crime, following an increase in home based abuse during the pandemic.
- During the year, in excess of £800k of additional funding had been secured by the OPCC from central government grants to support commissioned projects, including those providing specialised domestic abuse support and support for victims of serious sexual violence. An extended contract had been put in place for Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVA) in Portsmouth and work had been undertaken, in partnership with top-tier authorities, to combine services to enable consistency across the policing area.
- The Commissioner and his team had been working with criminal justice partners across the Wessex region with a focus on preparation for obligations under the new victims code and trial readiness. As a result of the backlog in court cases, caused by the pandemic, the OPCC had been working with partners and the Constabulary to extend support services for victims and witnesses and to seek better outcomes for victims by encouraging their ongoing engagement in the process. The OPCC had also supported the adoption of video evidence which was due to go live in Portsmouth Crown Court during February.
- A further £50,000 had been awarded to the VRU to enable work to continue through the winter months. Members heard that the VRU had

taken a public health approach to treat violent crime as a disease and aimed to isolate and prevent future offending and victimisation.

- The Safer Streets initiative had demonstrated a significant benefit during its pilot in Southampton, and therefore the PCC had committed funds through the budget for 2021/22 to deliver similar initiatives in Portsmouth and Basingstoke.

RESOLVED:

That the update on the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan was noted.

296. POLICE AND CRIME PANEL - UPDATES FROM WORKING GROUPS

An update was heard from the Chairman of the Panel's Working groups, outlining working undertaken since the last meeting of the Full Panel.

The Chairman of the Plan Working Group highlighted that the working group had recently met with the OPCC and had discussed the contrast between centralised and localised services, to understand the benefit of each to local communities. Conversation had continued looking at the role of Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) in the Commissioning process with improvement notes in some areas and had sought to understand progress and lessons learnt from the introduction of the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU).

Members heard that the Equality and Diversity Working group had held their inaugural meeting during the previous week. At that meeting Members had reviewed with the OPCC the outcomes from the recent misconduct proceedings, as well as initiatives relating to stop and search and the diversity profile of police officer recruitment.

297. POLICE AND CRIME PANEL - WORK PROGRAMME

Members received a report from the Democratic Support Officer to the Panel setting out the proposed work programme for the Panel.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme is agreed.