

North Yorkshire County Council

Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 26 September 2019, commencing at 10:30am in the Council Chamber at Hambleton District Council, Northallerton.

Present:-

Councillors: Keith Aspden (City of York Council), Helen Grant (Richmondshire District Council), Tim Grogan (Selby District Council), Carl Les (North Yorkshire County Council, in the Chair).

Community Co-opted Members: Paula Stott.

Julia Mulligan (Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner).

Supt Fran Naughton – North Yorkshire Police (for Item 11).

Officers from the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner: Simon Dennis (Acting Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer), Michael Porter (Chief Financial Officer), Will Naylor (Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner), Rena Brown (Head of Commissioning and Partnerships).

Officers from NYCC: Barry Khan (Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services), Diane Parsons (Panel Secretariat).

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

The Chair thanked Hambleton District Council for hosting the Panel meeting.

397. Apologies

Apologies were noted from Councillors Chambers, Colling, Foster, Mason, Middleton and Wilkinson, along with Community Co-opted Member Santokh Sidhu. The Chair reflected that consideration may need to be given in future to the scheduling of Panel meetings in September time due to absences for holidays.

398. Minutes of the meeting on 18th July 2019

Resolved –

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18th July 2019, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

399. Matters arising from the meeting held on 18th July 2019

(a) City Task Force update. The Commissioner provided a verbal update, highlighting that there had been a slightly delayed start to the Task Force but that a greater number of recruits had come forward after the shift pattern was changed. The Commissioner advised that there had been a lot of positive comments from businesses about the Task Force.

(b) Sale of Northallerton police station. Members conveyed that they had hoped to glean more information from the update around the criteria used in assessing the bids, the attempts to get Best Value and to reassure businesses and the community that the

Commissioner would be aspiring to the sale meeting the needs of the local community. These reassurances would need to be provided in advance of the property being sold. Michael Porter clarified that the Commissioner is seeking to achieve Best Value but that the planning authority would assess a bid based on its proposed use and plan local engagement; this is not the role of the OPFCC.

Resolved –

That the Panel:

(a) notes the updates provided; and

(b) receives a further update report in relation to the sale of Northallerton police station, highlighting how Best Value is being secured through the sale and the plans for local engagement.

400. Declarations of Interest

None were declared under this item of the agenda (Item 4). However, Councillor Keith Aspden subsequently declared an interest under Item 10 (Criminal justice overview) in relation to his membership on the national council for fire services.

401. Public Questions or Statements to the Panel

The Panel was advised that none had been submitted to the meeting.

402. Update report from the Complaints Sub-Committee

The Chair advised that this item would be deferred until the next meeting of the Panel in November.

403. Progress on Issues Raised by the Panel

Considered –

The note from the Panel Secretariat updating on progress on issues raised previously by the Panel.

Resolved –

That the Panel notes the written update provided.

404. Members' Questions

No questions were submitted.

405. Use of Tasers in North Yorkshire: the Commissioner's public survey

The Commissioner gave a verbal update on her public survey regarding the use of Tasers.

The Commissioner clarified that while any further rollout of Tasers in North Yorkshire would be an operational decision for the Chief Constable, the Chief and Commissioner had agreed that the Commissioner would gather the views of the public to help feed into a decision-making process.

The survey is open until 29th September 2019 and it was agreed that a report would come back to Panel in November with the survey outcomes and analysis.

Resolved –

That the Panel:

- (a) notes the verbal update provided; and
- (b) receives a report detailing the outcomes of the public survey and analysis of this at its meeting in November 2019.

406. Criminal Justice: An Overview of the Commissioner's Work in This Area

Considered –

The Commissioner's report giving an overview on her role in respect of criminal justice and service commissioning.

The Commissioner provided an overview for the Panel of this area of work which highlighted particular opportunities for the future around improving the criminal justice system locally as well as outlining challenges and successes. Potential opportunities locally include the development of Full Sutton prison and a new regional Board set up with the Director of the Probation Service. The Panel were advised of the complexity of working with a range of partners and agencies – for example through the Local Criminal Justice Board - where the Commissioner's role is to engage and influence partners in order to achieve better outcomes for victims but where the Commissioner has no authority to direct bodies such as the Crown Prosecution Service.

The Panel welcomed the Commissioner's report and congratulated the Commissioner and colleagues on the work that has gone into ensuring a range of initiatives are in place, particularly for prevention and early intervention. It was agreed that it would be helpful to have further detail around the numbers of people who have been users of these services and the outcomes, particularly in relation to projects such as York Pathways and some of the prevention and early intervention work (including where this supports work around County Lines). It was also identified that it would be useful to develop the Panel's understanding of the range of partners involved in this landscape. A further, detailed report to cover these points will be brought back to the Panel.

In response to a specific query, the Commissioner commented that she is keen that the LIFE scheme continues to receive funding but highlighted that ability of the fire service locally to commit to delivery of this may be impacted by ongoing national negotiations on pay and conditions.

Members highlighted that if there remain concerns around a strong local policing presence following the recruitment to neighbourhood policing activity this year, then greater connectivity needed to be made with those projects funded around engaging communities to help keep them safe. The Commissioner was asked to report back to Panel on the impact of the recruitment to neighbourhood policing in November 2019 or January 2020.

Resolved –

That the Panel:

- (a) notes the Commissioner's report;
- (b) receives a further report next year which details:
 - volumes of individuals engaging on interventions, particularly in respect of prevention and early intervention;
 - outcomes for those involved;
 - the range of partners involved.

(c) receives an update in November 2019 or January 2020 on the impact of the drive to boost neighbourhood policing.

407. Drug Dealing and How this is Being Tackled Across the Force Area

Considered –

The Commissioner's report on the growth of drug crime (County Lines) in North Yorkshire, how this is being tackled currently, the challenges and future plans.

The Commissioner expressed concern that the government is not fully recognising the scale and changing nature of this threat in terms of funding. Key measures put in place include oversight through the Serious Organised Crime Board, and significant increases in resources and activity to prevent and disrupt drug crime. A recent peer review highlighted good practice but also areas for improvement needed around partnership work and developing a better understanding of demand.

The Panel challenged the level of understanding of the problem by the force, with members feeling that the current assessment may only be "scratching the surface". Supt Naughton highlighted that the police are trying to educate the public and partners about County Lines in order to assist with their local intelligence picture. Members challenged how the issue was being dealt with strategically in relation to rivalries between groups operating outside of and within North Yorkshire, and in relation to appropriate data-sharing to identify those most vulnerable.

The Commissioner highlighted an upcoming drugs summit and also the variety of work underway with partners such as British Transport Police and those force areas outside of North Yorkshire where criminals are effectively 'exporting' into the county. The Commissioner felt there to be a more cohesive level of data-sharing on a regional and national basis now.

Members also reflected on the importance of youth provision in terms of prevention and that these services have diminished in recent years.

It was agreed that a further update report will be taken on this issue in 2020 and that the Panel would be grateful to know the outcomes of the drug summit. NYCC and City of York Council notes that they would welcome further engagement on the latter.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Panel notes the report;
- (b) That the Panel receives an update report in 2020 on drug crime, including the outcomes of the drugs summit; and
- (c) That further engagement is undertaken between the OPFCC, NYCC and City of York Council regarding the forthcoming drugs summit.

408. Police complaints handling at the OPFCC

Considered –

The report of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner updating Panel on plans for the handling of police complaints as a result of new legislation coming into force.

Sharon Caddell gave an overview of the position and planning for the new police complaints handling process in North Yorkshire. Key points included:

- The Joint Executive Board (NYP and NYFRS) has given approval in principle to the establishment of a Complaints and Recognition Team within the OPFCC;
- Recruitment for the new team will be undertaken shortly;
- A comprehensive implementation plan has been developed;
- Communications around the new handling process will step up considerably in the next few months.

The Panel were advised that the new process is expected to 'go live' in February 2020. Some of the anticipated improvements outlined for police complaints handling included:

- Greater capacity in the Professional Standards Department
- Greater accountability and customer satisfaction
- Better able to identify complaint trends and as such move towards a more learning culture within the police.

Resolved –

That the Panel:

- (a) notes the update report provided; and
- (b) receives a further update in 6-9 months.

409. 101 Non-Emergency Service Performance Update

Considered –

The report of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner updating on the recent performance of both the 999 and 101 non-emergency services.

Members noted the demonstrable progress in performance related to the 999 service, but queried whether the service could meet the national target of 10 seconds for answering a call. The Deputy Commissioner felt this was an attainable target and that impact had been felt of recent staffing changes and an increase in demand. Members heard that there had been a change in the shift pattern in the Force Control Room (FCR) earlier this year and as such to apply caution around analysis of the data for which there was only one month of figures since the changes had been introduced. The Panel heard that the figures for September 2019 (not part of the paperwork) were showing signs of improvements.

While Panel welcomed the measures put in place to improve both services over the last year, members expressed concern regarding the level of abandonment for calls to 101. The Commissioner was invited to consider setting a deadline for improvements to be made. The Commissioner felt that setting a deadline would be an arbitrary measure to impose and that there had been specific impacts to the FCR such as the recent police officer recruitment campaign, to which some officers had applied. The Commissioner felt confident that the force is doing everything it can at present to deal with the level of demand for the service. The Panel were advised that the abandonment rate is directly correlated to demand, which has been unusually high. The Commissioner wishes to see the recent changes through in relation to staffing and then undertake a review of performance.

The Panel were informed that other mechanisms to enable reporting to 101 are in development, including the single online home.

In response to Members' queries, the Commissioner advised that it is unknown why demand for both services had been so high in recent months and further analysis would be needed. The Deputy Commissioner also agreed to provide data on nuisance/inappropriate

calls to the FCR, although advised that these types of calls do not significantly impact the service.

The Panel were reminded that they are welcome to visit the Force Control Room.

Resolved –

That the Panel:

- (a) note the report provided; and
- (b) receive a further update on performance in six months' time, including an analysis of demand and of 'nuisance' calls received.

410. Work Programme

Considered –

The report by the Panel Secretariat, proposing a future programme of work for the Panel.

The Commissioner highlighted that no changes are planned to the Fire and Rescue Service's Integrated Risk Management Framework and as such this will not need to come to Panel. The Commissioner also asked if a further discussion could be had between the OPFCC and the Secretariat in respect of reporting around an accountability framework for the Fire and Rescue Plan.

Neighbourhood policing, and the impact on this as a result of the Commissioner's recruitment this year, will be included on the work programme in January 2020 (pre-cept).

The Commissioner asked the Panel to bring a report on progress made since November 2018 and the transfer of governance of the fire and rescue service. This will come to Panel in November 2019.

Resolved –

That the Panel:

- (a) notes the update report provided; and
- (b) includes the suggested items for future consideration within its work programme.

411. Grant Agreement for 2019/20 from the Home Office

Considered –

The report by the Panel Secretariat regarding the new grant conditions introduced by the Home Office for the 2019/20 grant offer.

A letter has been sent to the Home Office expressing concern at the nature of the new conditions imposed, which appear to be more focussed on quantitative, rather than qualitative, measures for the effectiveness of scrutiny. Liaison is also taking place through the regional Panel network and the National Association for Police, Fire and Crime Panels.

Resolved –

That the report be noted.

The meeting concluded at 12:10pm.
DP