

PUBLIC

MINUTES of a meeting of **DERBYSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL** held on Thursday, 16 March 2023 at Council Chamber, County Hall, Matlock.

PRESENT

Councillors W Armitage (North East Derbyshire District Council) C Hart (DCC), G Hickton (Erewash Borough Council - substitute member), P Innes (Chesterfield Borough Council), M Murray (Amber Valley Borough Council), H Dhindsa (Derby City Council), R Flatley (DCC), J Frudd (Erewash Borough Council) and Dr S Handsley Independent Member)

Officers present: Andrea Bond and Ivan Walters (Democratic Services)

Also in attendance was A Foster,(Police and Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire) A Dale, J Rhodes-Orwin and M Romano (OPCC)

Apologies for absence were submitted for Councillors A Barrow, V Clare, M Dooley, M Eyre, D Lomax D Murphy, P Niblock. G Potter, G Rhind and V Newbury Independent Member.

In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair Councillor Hart was appointed as Chair for the meeting

Councillor C Hart (In the Chair)

8/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

9/23 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 January were confirmed as a correct record.

10/23 MEMBER QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

A number of comments and questions were raised in relation to items to be considered later in the agenda, so it was agreed that these questions would be addressed by the Police and Crime Commissioner at that point of the meeting.

11/23 RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND EXIT INTERVIEW REPORT

The Police and Crime Commissioner provided the Panel with a report on the Recruitment, Retention and Exit Interviews process within Derbyshire Constabulary.

For the last 3 years (April 2020 – March 2023) the main recruitment focus for the Constabulary had been on police officers' numbers, as part of the Government Uplift programme - to recruit 20,000 new officers.

Derbyshire Constabulary's allocation was for an additional 283 new officers over this period and the Constabulary had successfully recruited more than the additional 283 officers' target. The additional number beyond 283 was in the region of 43 to 50 some of which would be funded and discussions continued with government on this matter.

There was an acknowledgement that increasing police officer numbers would require additional support staff. Therefore, there had been investment of £1.363m which covered a combination of associated costs including trainers, vetting, training, laptops, phones, IT licences, body worn video, Radio devices to support the Police Officer uplift programme.

The Police and Crime Commissioner had regular meetings with the Chief Constable and her team to scrutinise progress in this area of business as this falls under the Police and Crime Plan priority "Strong Local Policing".

As this was an operational matter, the Commissioner had asked the force to provide a detailed summary of the relevant information for the panel which was attached as an Appendix to the report.

Members were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions and particular reference was made to the following:

Were the force looking at the recruitment of military veterans, as although they may not currently have the required qualifications, they may have many transferable skills.

The Commissioner commented that the force was already doing that and had a programme in place to attract former military personnel to the force.

A number of panel members raised concerns on the retention of officers and highlighted the following statistics that were contained within the information provided by the Force:

- that a significant number left within the first 6 months;
- 5% of officers leaving preferred to not say why they were leaving
- Only 6% of police officers leaving requested an exit interview
- 70% of officers resigned in their first 5 years of service with majority

saying they had left for a better job

The Commissioner noted the comments made and explained that the force was constantly striving to improve the take up on the exit survey, which would then provide better information as the reasons why people were leaving.

A Panel Member commented that the information provided didn't show the diversity and make up of the people who had left and it would be useful if that information could be provided.

The Commissioner responded by saying that as discussed at a previous Panel meeting, the people most likely to leave in the first 2 to 3 years were women or members of the BEM community and that the force were striving to provide additional support for that cohort of people. It was agreed that more details giving a further breakdown on this matter would be circulated to Panel members.

RESOLVED to note report.

12/23 VETTING REPORT

The Police and Crime Commissioner provided the Panel with a report on the vetting processes within the Derbyshire Constabulary.

Following the Sarah Everard Murder by a serving Police Officer, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), was commissioned to inspect how Vetting, Misconduct and Misogyny were being dealt with across all 43 police forces, this included the ability to detect and deal with predatory behaviour, by its officers and staff. This inspection made a number of recommendations.

Baroness Casey's interim report into the culture and standards at the Metropolitan Police Service, published last year, raised concerns about the low number of police officers being dismissed and that those with multiple allegations of misconduct against them are still serving the public.

On Friday the 20th of January 2023, all police forces in England and Wales were informed there would be a requirement to update the progress against each of the recommendations identified by HMICFRS by Wednesday the 25th of January 2023, some of which were relating to vetting.

The Commissioner explained that her role was to make sure that the Force were providing a high standard of service to residents and considered that this included ensuring that officers and staff that had not passed the vetting standards, or that had additional adverse information against them, were dealt with swiftly and in the appropriate manner.

The Commissioner had regular meetings with the Chief Constable and her team to monitor progress on recruitment and vetting and had received reassurance that the above request by HMICFRS had been complied with. Derbyshire Constabulary had responded identifying that at the time that the Constabulary were compliant with all the recommendations including those relating to vetting, either having already been implemented or would be, within the recommended timescales for implementation.

The Commissioner explained that her Performance Scrutiny meeting in November had focussed on violence against women and girls and details had been provided of how many officers had/were being investigated.

The Commissioner had asked the force to summarise their operational activities on this matter and a detailed summary of the relevant information for the panel was attached as an Appendix to the report.

Members were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions and particular reference was made to the following:

That some women within the force were fearful of speaking out, which in turn could lead to long term sickness absence or women leaving the force completely.

The Commissioner explained that she was made aware of such information and she sought reassurance on a regular basis from the Chief Constable. She believed that significant progress had been made over recent years with women less afraid to speak out, but that more work could be done. Derbyshire Constabulary worked alongside Crimestoppers and others to identify misogyny and whilst no one could say there weren't 'bad apples' within the force, she was able to reassure the Panel that every effort was being made to identify them.

A number of members raised the issue of the need for balance and whilst recognising the positive work the majority of officers and staff were doing, emphasised that the strong vetting processes in place within the force were a key mechanism in identifying those people who were a danger to the workforce and the public. It was noted that 4000 people had been submitted into the system for checks and members requested that the outcome of these be made available to the Panel once known

The Commissioner understood that it remained an ongoing challenge both locally and nationally and that the force would do more and more to make sure offenders were identified. She agreed to provide the requested data once known.

A member raised the question that nationally, in only 10% of cases of those found guilty was any action taken and could the figures for Derbyshire Constabulary be provided.

The Commissioner agreed to provide these figures for Panel Members.

RESOLVED to note the report.

13/23 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PCC

The Police and Crime Commissioner made reference to the following:

The next round of Anti Social Behaviour Grants would be launched in April

The next performance Scrutiny meeting would take place on 21 March and focus on Neighbourhood Crime and Anti Social Behaviour.

The Commissioner would host a Victim Support Event on 18 May and Panel Members would be invited to help them better understand the victim services which are commissioned by the Commissioner.

14/23 FORTHCOMING EVENTS

There were no forthcoming events to report, though it was noted that confirmation had now been received from the home office with regard to the co-opted member appointments.

15/23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 22 JUNE 2023 AT 10AM

To note the date of the next meeting

The meeting finished at 11.15 am