

MINUTES of a meeting of the **DERBYSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL** held on 21 November 2019 at County Hall, Matlock

PRESENT

Councillor C Hart (in the Chair)

Councillors A Barrow (High Peak Borough Council), R Bright (Derbyshire Dales District Council), V Clare (Erewash Borough Council), J Frudd (Erewash Borough Council), J Mannion-Brunt (Chesterfield Borough Council), R Mee (Erewash Borough Council), P Niblock (Chesterfield Borough Council), S Peake (Bolsover District Council), P Pegg (Derby City Council), G Potter (Derby City Council), M Potts (NE Derbyshire District Council), J Smale (Derby City Council), and B Woods (Derbyshire County Council)

Derbyshire County Council officers also in attendance: Ivan Walters, (Democratic Services, DCC) and L Wild (Legal Services, DCC).

Also in attendance: H Dhindsa, Police and Crime Commissioner, K Gillott, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, A Dale, Chief Finance Officer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner J Rhodes Orwin and D Robinson Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors F Atkinson, M Bagshaw, A Wheelton and Mr S Handsley & V Newbury (Independent Members),

25/19 **MINUTES RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Derbyshire Police and Crime Panel held on 12 September 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

26/19 **MEMBER QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION** Members were provided with a written response to the Police and Crime Panel to the pre-submitted questions raised by individual Panel members.

Councillor Potter: Could all Derbyshire PCP panel members be supplied with the most up to date expenditure and expense account figures for the PCC office, together with the last 3 previous years accounts in time for the November PCP meeting. ?

PCC Response: The figures were provided separately to Panel Members and discussed at the meeting

Councillor Potter: Our Towns and Cities are suffering from Anti- Social Behaviour, in many cases caused by drug users and those undertaking aggressive begging, as we approach the festive period and hopefully more families will be visiting our Towns and Cities will our Policing Priorities reflect the need for families and visitors to feel reassured by visible policing and effective action against those who are intent on causing alarm and distress?.

PCC Response: Concern about anti-social behaviour in our city and other major conurbations and its impact on those who live, work and shop in those centres has been a concern for the Commissioner for some time, and isn't just limited to the festive period. The causes of this behaviour are complex and not simply a result of reductions in police visibility.

The Panel will recollect from previous meetings that the Commissioner facilitated and chaired the Derby City Centre and Chesterfield Town Centre Summits to address these very issues in those two localities. In addition, he has hosted smaller "mini summits" in other communities.

Increasing police officer and staff numbers so as to increase visible policing has been a priority for the Commissioner and has been funded by his decision to increase the council tax to replace some of the police officers and staff lost as a result of the Government's austerity policy.

Officers from the Commissioners staff discussed policing over the Christmas period with the Force at the end of the summer and the Commissioner has already had a briefing on this subject from one Divisional Commander and anticipates that the other Divisional Commander will cover the issue at their next regular meeting.

Local Inspectors are currently preparing reports for their Divisional Command Team on how they propose to police town/city centres during the Christmas period. However, it should be remembered that all such plans are subject to unexpected operational need and that keeping town centres safe and welcoming places is not solely a policing issue.

The decision regarding when and what action to take against anyone engaging in anti-social behaviour or criminal activity is a matter for the individual police officer and not for the Commissioner. However a criminal justice solution is not always the most effective option and, the Commissioner has supported a number of measures to make dealing with this type of behaviour more effective, including working with and financially supporting partners to provide alternative solutions such as the Safe Space in Derby and the Pathways Homelessness initiative in Chesterfield.

Councillor Mee: In September, the government announced a £10m budget for equipping additional officers with Taser.

A number of forces (e.g. Northamptonshire and Durham) now equip all frontline response officers with Taser if they request it.

1. If this “new” money does actually materialise, is there any indication that any of it will be offered to Derbyshire, and if so will it be accepted?

PCC Response: Whilst the Government may have announced this initiative several months ago, not for the first time, a government announcement wasn't accompanied by details of how the money is to be spent.

There are currently no indications regarding which Forces will receive any of the National Taser funding, never mind how much they might receive. It is known that the funding will be subject to a bidding process, although the criteria used when making a bid are not known. However, subject to those criteria it is expected that Derbyshire will submit a bid for additional funding to support the Chief Constable's current policy on the rollout of TASER.

2. What is the view of the Police and Crime Commissioner regarding the much wider availability of this weapon for use by officers? In this regard, I would welcome your comments not only on the budgetary implications, but also on public perception. I would also ask if your views are at all affected by the geographical issues which face a force such as Derbyshire.

PCC Response: The decision surrounding the rollout of TASER, how many officers carry a TASER and in what circumstances, is an operational matter for the Chief Constable, not the PCC. However, the PCC has been supportive of the Chief Constable in his decision to equip more officers with a TASER and to train 100 additional police officers per year in its use over the next 3 years.

The Panel will recollect from its deliberations at the beginning of this year that part of this year's precept increase was to pay for the training of more police officers in the use of TASER, including the recruitment of two dedicated police officer TASER trainers.

Whilst supportive of the Chief Constable when operation need requires police officers to carry a TASER, the PCC is aware of the wider “public perception” issue raised by this question and of how the public may have mixed views on whether all police officers should routinely carry a TASER. It is a matter that he has raised in appropriate arenas and is supportive of a wider, national, public debate taking place to better understand the public's view. The Commissioner would welcome the comments of Panel Members on this issue of greater use of TASER.

If the policy of the Government is to have more or all “front line” police officers carry a TASER, particularly if a stage were reached when that level of TASER deployment was not being requested by the Chief Constable, that is not without substantial cost. The view of the Commissioner is that policing has been underfunded for most of the last decade and that central government should contribute more towards paying for policing rather than continuing to rely on the local council tax payer to pick up the costs

RESOLVED to note the question and answer session

27/19 CHALLENGE TOPIC : IMPACT AND PREVALENCE OF DOMESTIC ABUSE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES Hardyal Dhindsa provided the Panel with a summary on the findings of a rural survey conducted by the National Rural Crime Network (NRCN); progress made so far in terms of commissioning of DA services taking into account rurality; and options for future outreach and engagement including a summary of the Dragonfly project in Dorset and local options with the Farming community.

The National survey was undertaken by a small private company called ‘The Buzzz’ who were contracted to do the work. The Buzzz were an independent market research company who are members of the MRS (Market Research Society) and ESOMAR. They had experience of working with victims of crime, Domestic and Sexual Abuse since 2014. A team of 3 researchers undertook the project.

The researchers found the following overarching national themes:

- Rural victims are half as likely to report their abuse to others.
- Rural victims’ abuse goes on significantly longer.
- Rural victims cannot readily access support services.
- Rural victims live in a society that defacto protects the perpetrators.
- Rural victims are “ isolated, unsupported and unprotected in a rural hell, which is purposefully ‘normalised’.”

The researchers identified a number of national themes and recommendations that were detailed in the PCCs report.

The survey findings in Derbyshire were based on a very small number of respondents from Derbyshire , in total 35 for the whole, so caution must be taken in relation to the findings, although general themes may be considered.

- Derbyshire was one of only two areas using ONS postcode classifications to define rurality. This has resulted in their focus on rurality to be reflective of the most isolated rural areas.

- Derbyshire are also commended for using data analysis to inform commissioning strategy – in collaboration with the council therefore we have a platform to continue to use performance data to support the commissioning of future victim services.
- In Derbyshire, the importance of localised service provision was underlined throughout.
- Derbyshire is the only area sampled other than Lincolnshire who uses the ONS defined categorisation of rural and urban areas. It is recommended that postcode analysis to use in the planning and commissioning strategy to ensure a more equal distribution of resources between urban and rural areas.
- Specific initiatives need to be targeted at rural areas to compensate for the under-reporting and as the implications of this study start to show themselves within the terms of contracted services.
- From a referral perspective, the role of GP's is underlined in the picture for Derbyshire and could play a more prominent role in terms of outreach.
- In Derbyshire, it appears that the small numbers of rural victims responding to the survey could all access support services within 30 minutes which may support the current distribution of smaller localised partners.
- In Derbyshire, there were few (4 in total) responses from victims aged over 55. However, the national findings suggest this may be an overlooked group across the UK.
- In Derbyshire the researchers found concerns around fragmentation of service.
- The policing response for Derbyshire shows a mixed picture. However, the sample size was small with the result that 3 in 5 victims responding to the survey had contacted the police from urban areas compared to just 2 in 5 for rural areas and the more remote rural areas the numbers contacting the police dropped again. This reflects a national picture.
- Interviews with victims in Derbyshire referenced a common factor of a dominant male in the relationship more than any broader societal influence.
- In Derbyshire, the researchers found a significant fear amongst victims that calling the police would lead to an almost automatic involvement of Social Services.
- While present in both rural and urban Derbyshire, the overriding sense from our interviews with rural victims was the feeling of embarrassment/shame they felt by admitting to the small world they lived in that they were a victim.
- Appropriate locations need to be found for people to attend courses such as Freedom programme due to the reliance on failing rural transport

The researchers recommended the following for Derbyshire:

- Obtain a more comprehensive data set amongst victims of Domestic Abuse in Derbyshire
- Conduct a reassessment of current strategic commissioning for the rural areas
- Improve current service provision – distributed too thinly, under resourced and under duress
- assess the police service's ability to respond and the level of training and gender balance of officers needed to attend to Domestic Abuse incidents

The PCC outlined the response from his office:

The sample size of the NRCN survey meant that the survey must be treated with with caution (only 35 people responded). Further testing of the findings may be required to understand if these are really playing out in the communities of Derbyshire as you could not be assured of the statistical validity.

The current commissioning strategy for all victim services is founded on an open and transparent procurement process based on service specifications written according to need and following extensive review. Procurement of medium risk Domestic Abuse services in the County between the OPCC and local authority has been consolidated under a single consortia provision covering the geographical requirements of the county. The high risk service in the City and County is contracted to one single provided and an aligned specification. Both specifications account for rural outreach, accommodation and access for people from rural communities. There is also a county-wide advice/helpline to increase access. Bespoke cases studies were used during the tendering process to elicit responses to provide assurance around effective engagement and targeted interventions for rural victims.

Work is developing with Rural Action Derbyshire who have strong and trusted links with the rural and farming communities across Derbyshire. Discussions are taking place to scope some key activities to further inform and enhance our understanding of Domestic Abuse and design services appropriate to the rural context. This may include some of the following:

- Developing networks with women in farming around the county and holding informal focus groups.
- Undertaking surveys at farming and social events with women in particular around the issue to gain a better understanding of the issues.

- Developing funding bids in partnership.
- Developing training products to roll out awareness raising training next year to groups such as young farmers, women's groups such as WI and Mothers Union, and men's groups where they exist
- Further developing rural Digital Hubs and champions to be able to provide access to advice and a safe place where people can access information and services.
- Identifying positive male role models in rural communities who can have these conversations, such as male chaplains and farmer volunteers.

The OPCC would work with the Force to explore together how rural communities are effectively policed including the PPU and the vulnerability teams. It is not clear if the issues about visibility and response times relating to DA are truly reflective.

The OPCC had commenced a scoping exercise on a volunteer outreach programme modelled on a service provided in Dorset called Dragonfly. The Dragonfly Project started in 2016 in Dorset to identify victims of domestic violence and abuse (DVA) who are isolated within their own communities. This was based on a recognition that some people are not able to access services, or are not even aware that these services exist. The following describes the service offer which is essentially about communities supporting communities. It has resulted in both an increase in rural referrals and elderly referrals to the commissioned services. They:

- Train Champions living and working in communities so they are able to receive and respond to disclosures of DVA
- Work together to end misplaced stigma to enable people in our communities to access support and help for themselves if they are experiencing DVA
- Empowering communities to support and help those who are being affected by DVA
- Educating communities to work together to raise awareness of DVA
- Make support easily accessible in isolated areas
- Increase early identification and intervention to prevent any long term adverse effects of DVA
- Offer ongoing links for all Champions to a specialist DVA Worker

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions or make comments which were duly answered or noted.

RESOLVED to note the report

28/19 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE Panel Members were asked to consider for review the current Complaints Procedure adopted by Derbyshire's Police and Crime Panel (PCP).

The current Complaints Procedure was adopted by Derbyshire's Police and Crime Panel in April 2013. A copy of the Procedure was attached at Appendix 1 to the report

The Panel has statutory responsibilities under the Elected Local Policing bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012. These include the Panel ensuring that it is kept informed about complaints and conduct matters and their handling in respect of Derbyshire's Police and Crime Commissioner and his Deputy, together with responsibilities regarding informal resolution in respect of particular complaints. There are further requirements to notify and refer complaints to the Independent Police Complaints Commission in certain circumstances.

In accordance with the regulations detailed above, the Panel is able to delegate the receipt, initial handling and recording functions relating to complaints to the Chief Executive of the Commissioner or the Monitoring Officer of the host authority (the Director of Legal Services of Derbyshire County Council). Under the current procedure, at paragraph 4.1, the Panel has delegated authority for the initial handling of complaints together with other aspects of the process to Derbyshire County Council's Monitoring Officer and Director of Legal Services under section 101(2) of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Panel is also able to delegate the functions regarding informal resolution to a sub-committee, a single member of the Panel, or to a person who is not a member of the Panel. Under the current Procedure, the Panel has also delegated this function to the Monitoring Officer and Director of Legal Services of Derbyshire County Council under at paragraph 4.1.

The current Complaints Procedure has been in place since April 2013 and Members of the Panel have indicated a wish to review it.

LGA guidance from May 2015 "*Good Practice for Police and Crime Panels: Guidance Document*" recommends that in reviewing the complaints procedure, it is good practice for panels to consider:

- Clearly setting out responsibility for all types of complaint

- Reviewing whether a triage system would be useful
- Making sure that complainants understand that recording a complaint is not the same as upholding it
- Considering whether it is appropriate for the chair of the panel to see all complaints
- Many complaints against police officers to the IPCC are partly upheld through lack of recording although the substance later fails. The produces unsatisfactory outcomes – consider scrutinising the PCC's performance in tackling this
- Having clear guidance for recording complaints
- Developing clear guidance for recording complaints
- Rather than referring to the IPCC general casework team; referrals should be to a specialist link with experience of PCC complaints
- Having a process to take back and conclude complaints when received back from the IPCC

Therefore, it was felt that Members may consider it appropriate to identify a working party to review the Complaints Procedure, taking into account the guidance provided by the LGA.

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions or make comments which were duly answered or noted and a general discussion took place around the current complaints procedure.

29/19 **POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – GRANT BUDGET** The Chairman mentioned that at the recent training event those present had asked for a breakdown over the last three years of how the annual grant funding received from central government to support the work of the Police and Crime Panel had been used. She also felt that there was a need for some of this funding to be utilised towards providing dedicated scrutiny officer time to support the work of the Police and Crime Panel.

RESOLVED that a report be provided to a future meeting of the Police and Crime Panel

30/19 **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE PCC** Hardyal Dhindsa, the Police and Crime Commissioner announced the following:-

The Derbyshire Spotlight Newsletter had recently been published and PCP Members had received a copy. Further hard copies were available upon request.

Two dedicated officers had now been assigned to coordinate the Community Speedwatch Scheme and provide a support and training network

for the many volunteers across the County in order to enhance the work of the scheme.

It was noted that as part of the Forces phased recruitment plan 85 police officers would be recruited next year. There would be 50 recruited 'in house' at the beginning of next subject to funding with a further 35 late in the year.

Neighbourhood Watch Schemes across the County continued to flourish and were coming up with positive ideas of what more could be done in communities.

The deadline for local organisation to apply for Community Action grants was 30 November so PCP members were asked to spread the word locally.

The indications from the Home Office were that due to the General Election there may be a delay in the announcement of the budget until early January which may compromise some of the key dates in terms of lead in time on budget papers.

The PCC paid tribute to Annie Hall the former High Sheriff of Derbyshire who tragically lost her life in the recent floods and highlighted that as a key Business Leader and champion and supporter of the Police Force her death was a great loss.

RESOLVED to note the announcements from the Police and Crime Commissioner.

31/19 **FUTURE MEETINGS** The Chairman raised the issue of future meeting venues, and the need to encourage greater public participation. Following a discussion amongst members with regards to venues for future meetings, Councillor Hart proposed that future meetings should be held across the County rather than all being held at County Hall, this was duly seconded by Councillor Potts.

RESOLVED (1) that following a vote it was carried that where possible future meetings would be held at different venues across the county commencing at 10am; and

(2) that the budget precept meeting scheduled for 23 January 2020 would remain at County Hall at 10am.

32/19 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** **RESOLVED** to note that the next meeting of the Derbyshire Police and Crime Panel would take place on Thursday 23 January 2020 commencing at 10.00am at County Hall, Matlock.