

POLICE AND CRIME PANEL
Tuesday, 7th February, 2017

Present:-

Barnsley MBC

Councillor R. Frost

Councillor D. Griffin

Rotherham MBC

Councillor B. Cutts

Councillor S. Sansome

Sheffield CC

Councillor J. Drayton

Councillor J. Otten

Councillor M. Rooney

Councillor T. Hussain (in the Chair);

Co-opted Members

Mr. A. Carter

Mr. S. Chu

Apologies were received from Councillors J. Healy and C. McGuinness. (Doncaster MBC).

43. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr. Alan Carter, Co-opted Member, declared a personal interest in Minute No. 51 on the grounds that it involved his membership on the Panel and left the room whilst the item was discussed.

44. TO DETERMINE ANY ITEM WHICH THE CHAIRMAN IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY

The Chair indicated that there were no items for consideration on the agenda that would require the exclusion of the press and public from the meeting.

45. TO CONSIDER WHETHER THE PRESS AND PUBLIC SHOULD BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING DURING CONSIDERATION OF ANY PART OF THE AGENDA

The Chair indicated that there were no items requiring the urgent consideration of the Panel.

46. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

It was reported that no public questions had been received.

47. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PANEL

In accordance with Procedure Rule 11 (General Questions from Members of the Panel), the following question had been submitted and the response from the Police and Crime Commissioner:-

From Mr. Alan Carter:-

“In common with the most urban areas throughout the country, South Yorkshire’s local highway authorities are increasingly introducing 20 mph zones in our towns and cities as road safety measures, especially in residential areas and in the vicinity of schools.

20 mph zones are claimed to be self-enforcing due to traffic calming measures which are often introduced along with the change in the speed limit. Speed humps, chicanes, road narrowing, planting and other measures are typically used to both physically and visually reinforce the shared nature of the road.

These new lower limits are usually enforced through mobile (rather than fixed speed cameras and, in some places, drivers already risk fines of £100 and three penalty points for exceeding the new limits.

Accepting that it is for local authorities to set speed limits, nevertheless it falls ultimately to the Police to decide how best to enforce them.

Given the reduction in Police manpower and the clear need for prioritisation of the operational use of available resources, where does the Commissioner stand on this issue of 20 mph speed limit enforcement?”

Answer:-

People in many parts of South Yorkshire are anxious about speeding.

The growing use of 20 mph limits are decisions for the local authority rather than the Police. It is for them to decide in the end how effective they are. I would hope that the local authorities would work closely with the Police to ensure that where they are introduced there is a clear case. The most effective means of reducing speed are, however, material measures such as speed humps and chicanes, not 20 mph speed limits.

Having said that, South Yorkshire Police will enforce speed limits whenever they are in a position to do so, given the pressures on resources. This may mean targeting some particular places where the public are most at risk – such as outside schools – and where drivers are wilfully or repeatedly ignoring them.

The ultimate aim of all policing activity is – as it says in the Police and Crime Plan – to keep the people of South Yorkshire safe.

In a supplementary question Mr. Carter asked if the inclusion of “outside care homes on main roads”, as well as outside schools, could be added where the Police were targeting particular places where the public were at significant risk.

The Police and Crime Commissioner confirmed he would pass this onto South Yorkshire Police.

48. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 16 DECEMBER 2016

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16th December, 2016.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Police and Crime Panel held on 16th December, 2016 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings, subject to a further paragraph relating to the letter from the Police and Crime Commissioner to Safeguarding Boards in relation to grants.

49. PROPOSED COUNCIL TAX FOR 2017-18

In accordance with Paragraph 2 of Section 5 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 consideration was given to the report which set out details of the Police and Crime Commissioner’s proposed revenue budget and council tax for South Yorkshire for 2017/18.

The Police and Crime Commissioner reported that whilst the proposed council tax represented an increase of 10p per week for a Band D property, the majority of properties were in Band A which would see an increase per week of 6p if the proposed increase was agreed. Without increasing the council tax by the maximum amount allowed, any future requests made to the Home Office for special grant funding for the costs of legacy issues would not be counted. The potential impact of a reduction in funding (£1.7 m) would equate to the cost of reducing the workforce by 34 officers or 57 police staff.

This Budget was based on certain assumptions, but that it maintained current workforce numbers. The flat cash funding position and reduction of £2.5 m in Government grant would be offset by an increase in the precept income.

In addition, following the peer review a new force operating model would provide better strategic focus on demand so that an effective and efficient policing model could be resourced. This would need to be fully integrated to maximise impact for the public and staff and serve as the foundation for all future changes and prevent further risk to service delivery.

Attention was also drawn to saving proposals which had been identified to offset additional costs, including reductions in spending in 2016/17, proposed to be carried forward as contributions from reserves.

In terms of reserves the proposed budget for 2017/18 relied on a contribution from general reserves of £7.8 m to achieve a balanced budget. Management of the 2016/17 budget had been to reduce spending so that reserves would be available at the end of the year and be carried forward for use in financing expenditure in 2017/18.

Consultation on the budget proposals had taken place both online and face to face with 93% and 77% respectively, from the two separate samples, being in favour. All comments received would be taken on board.

The Chief Finance and Commissioning Officer echoed the comments by the Police and Crime Commissioner and confirmed the grant settlement figures were now confirmed and if the inclusion of the council tax requirement was confirmed would represent an increase of approximately £0.3 m (or 0.13% compared to 2016/17). Clarity was provided on the contributions from reserves, which provided for some development of the force operating model and the identification of savings for future years.

Panel Members sought clarification on a number of issues and were advised accordingly:-

- Without the increases to the precept workforce numbers would have to reduce. Value for money would be demonstrated through best practice and learning from the past, but this would continue to be closely monitored.
- Investments in new technology, buildings and equipment in the capital programme for 2017/18 included improvements to some station buildings and potentially some joint location collaboration between South Yorkshire Police and South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue. As requested further narratives on the capital programme would be provided in future reports where appropriate to do so.
- Whilst assumptions could only be made on the potential legacy issue costs, it would be unlikely that any underspend on funding could be used as part of the Police and Crime Plan. However, it was pointed out that whilst a collaborative judgement could be assumed the actual costs when realised could increase beyond any assumptions. Work on the workforce plan was a complex operation following the peer review, but work was taking place to ensure the force was capable and resourced to meet current and future demands.
- Use of savings to put into reserves, yet using approximately £4.1 m was an approach to manage the 2016/17 budget so that reserves would be available at the end of year and be carried forward for use

in financing expenditure for 2017/18.

- Details on the force strategy delivery plan for the operating model were still being consulted upon and work was taking place to develop a meaningful performance framework to underpin the plan.
- Public perception from removing Police buildings from use was taken into account, whether this building was used or not.
- Success of the recent prosecutions of individuals involved in child sexual exploitation and the need for continued transitional support for victims and survivors following convictions.
- Grant support to local organisations, which were to be maintained in the budget, which also included local Safeguarding Boards, who were historically responsible for dividing funds.
- Recognition for different modern crime policing roles rather than the traditional visible beat presence. Continuation of Operation Duckford concentrated on specific areas and executing warrants.
- Increases in public poverty for working and non-working families as a result of the Government's cuts to public spending and the shortfall pushed to be found locally.
- Contributions from reserves amounting to £11.5 m, with a contribution from the general fund of £3.9 m from underspends in 2016/17 to be carried forward to meet expenditure in 2017/18. This contribution of £3.9 m would meet potential one off severance costs associated with savings proposals of workforce replenishment. i.e. allowing higher paid staff to leave and recruiting new staff at a lower level. A provisional assessment suggested that further savings of around £3 m would be required in 2018/19, which could change as a result of the delivery of savings assumed in 2017/18 and cumulatively savings of around £13m would be required over four years beyond 2017/18.

Resolved:- That the proposed annual increase in council tax for 2017/18 of £5 for a Band D property (a 3.26% increase) to £158.16 be approved.

50. HOST AUTHORITY ARRANGEMENTS

Consideration was given to a report which provided an update on the host authority arrangements for the Police and Crime Panel from 1st April, 2017 onwards. Transitional support from Rotherham would continue beyond April, 2017, including the legal provision.

It was noted Rotherham became the host authority for the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel following the establishment of the Police and Crime Panels under the Police Reform and Social

Responsibility Act. At the time that the Panel was established it was agreed that this arrangement would continue for four years. In that time, the Panel had undertaken significant work responding to local issues that have also attracted national attention.

The Leaders of the South Yorkshire Councils recently considered a proposal for the South Yorkshire Joint Governance Unit, located at Barnsley MBC, to assume responsibility as the host authority for the Police and Crime Panel. The paper presented to the Leaders reflected the significant work that the Panel has undertaken during the current municipal year and noted the aspirations of Members for a more proactive approach towards scrutiny of policing and community safety issues in South Yorkshire.

The Leaders agreed to the proposal for the South Yorkshire Governance Unit to assume responsibility for the administration and support of the Police and Crime Panel from 1st April, 2017.

Assurances were provided to the Panel that various matters relating to complaints, governance and the website would be addressed in the near future and resolved before and as part of the transitional arrangements.

Resolved:- That the report be received and the contents noted.

51. INDEPENDENT CO-OPTED MEMBER - TERM OF OFFICE

In accordance with Schedule 6 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 consideration was given to the report which outlined how the Panel currently had two co-opted independent Members and invited the Panel to consider how it wished to proceed in respect of the upcoming vacancy when Mr. Alan Carter's term of office ceased in September, 2017.

The Panel considered the options available to them as set out in the submitted report and were in agreement that Mr. Carter should be invited to extend his term of office given his involvement and level of experience. However, further discussion should take place with Mr. Carter should he be in agreement with continuing as to his likely term of office up to a maximum of four years.

Resolved:- That the term of office for Mr. Alan Carter, independent co-opted member, be extended for a period of up to four years and that this be confirmed in due course.

(Mr. Alan Carter, Co-opted Member, declared a personal interest and left the room whilst the item was discussed)

52. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Resolved:- That the next meeting of the Police and Crime Panel take place on Friday, 24th February, 2017 at 11.00 a.m.