



**WATFORD**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL



# MEETING OF THE HERTFORDSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Thursday 4 February 2021 –  
7:00pm

## MINUTES

**(Please note the minutes are a brief summary of the discussion and not intended to be verbatim)**

**Members Present:** Cllr S Monaghan (Chair), Broxbourne Borough Council  
Cllr Isy Imarni (Vice Chair), Dacorum Borough Council  
Cllr P Choudhury, Hertsmere Borough Council  
Dr M Ramsay, Independent Member (Independent member)  
Mr Ian Laidlaw-Dickson (Independent member)  
Cllr J Hollywell, Stevenage Borough Council  
Cllr C Woodward, Hertfordshire County Council  
Cllr G Saffery, Watford Borough Council  
Cllr A Curtis, East Herts District Council  
Cllr S Hodgson, St Albans City and District Council  
Cllr Scarth, Three Rivers District Council  
Cllr Bernard Sarson - Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council  
Cllr Sam North – North Herts District Council

**Also Present:** Mr David Lloyd, Police and Crime Commissioner  
Mr David Gibson, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner  
Mr Chris Brace, Chief Executive, PCC  
Dr Amie Birkhamshaw, Director of Strategy, PCC  
Mr Ian Rooney, Director of Finance, PCC  
Mrs N Boateng, Clerk to the Police and Crime Panel  
Mr John Hale

## **1. WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Police and Crime Panel meeting.

## **2. APOLOGIES and DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

No apologies.

Cllr Sam North declared an interest, that he had been nominated as the liberal democrat candidate for the Police and Crime Commissioner elections in May 21.

## **3. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 12 November 2020**

The minutes were agreed

## **4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

No matters arising

## **5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

Mr John Hale asked the following question:-

“Providing the COVID-19 vaccine to the police and other front line emergency workers, such as the Fire and Rescue Service, would help to protect those that provide vital services to the community and reduce the risk of service disruption.

Does the Police and Crime Commissioner agree with the Police Federation and Sir Simon Stevens, Chief Executive NHS, that Police Officers should be considered for the next round of Covid-19 vaccinations? If he does, could he explain what he has done so far to influence government to make it happen?”

Commissioner's response:-

I agree that front line officers should be early in the receipt of vaccinations, the decision is a government decision informed by the joint committee on public health, and I have lobbied at a National level for this. The Association of PCCs and Chief Constable and national chief Council is also in favour. Locally we are part of a voluntary program whereby excess vaccinations left over at the end of the day are administered to police officers and staff. So far 169 police officers and staff have been vaccinated under the program.

## **6. QUESTIONS TO THE PANEL FROM THE PUBLIC**

The questions from Mary Fleming were put to the panel (questions can be found at appendix A)

PCP Chair - Cllr SM began by first offering her apology to Ms Fleming for not posing her questions correctly at the last meeting. Ms Fleming had wanted her questions posed to the Panel. However the questions were put the Commissioner. Cllr SM apologised for this misunderstanding.

NB read the three questions to Panel. (The background papers and questions had been circulated previously to the panel)

**Panel response:-**

Cllr SN:

Quick question, can we ask the Commissioner if there has been any follow up on the discussion and meetings that were said to have taken place as set out in the response on 10 June.

Cllr SM:

Asked that the Panel discuss the three questions first and if there are issues afterwards we can refer those questions back to the Commissioner at that stage.

Cllr SN:

I believe unequivocally that the Hertfordshire Police and the PCC should be monitoring racial inequality, I believe a lot of things have to change to ensure that inequality is tackled. It is unacceptable that a black person is 4.7 times more likely to be stopped and searched than a white person, this clearly isn't good enough. If things are the same as they were at 10<sup>th</sup> June, I would be very disappointed. I would hope that things have been put in place to ensure more measured, effective policing and racial equality.

Cllr AC:

First question - It is important that the Commissioner carries out scrutiny into policing and racial inequality in the area. The budget refers to a proposal to create a diversity and inclusion team and this could be something that they look into given the public interest in the issue.

Question two – I think you were provided with an honest answer. I think that when you look at the stop and search scrutiny panel and we review the report they put together each year they look at proportionality.

Question three – Going forward there is perhaps a need to formalise the scrutiny.

Cllr PC:

First question – I do think the Commissioner should be carrying out scrutiny into policing and disproportionality, this is something I have mentioned to the Commissioner previously, unless we start calculating information about ethnicity you can't say whether it is disproportionately affecting one group over another, also you can't protect yourself against complaints that you are disproportionately affecting one group. Anytime we have statistics from the PCCs office we should get a breakdown in terms of ethnicity, age and gender to scrutinise whether any group is disproportionately affected. Then if we see something that is unusual we can use our scrutiny powers to drill down and understand what has happened and ascertain if there is a problem with proportionality.

Cllr JH:

First question: I certainly agree that there should be scrutiny as Ms Fleming has raised and I think the PCC has a responsibility to do that, earlier this year we had the black lives matter issue and in Stevenage we had a big motion at Full Council considering that. I am setting up an equalities

commission in Stevenage to look at this, and other aspects. I just wanted to add, perhaps we should look at all the 7 protected characteristics and consider them as well.

Cllr AS:

Yes, this sort of scrutiny should be in place. If it is being addressed now then that is a step forward. I support what the other Panel members have said.

Cllr II:

This is something that I have raised at previous meetings and I concur that it is something that should be recorded and any disparities addressed.

Cllr SM:

I wanted this to be a panel discussion of the questions asked by Ms Fleming, that we would then compile in order to respond to Ms Fleming and also use the note for any follow up points that needed to be passed to the PCCs office.

Cllr SM: Thanked the Panel for their comments and contribution to the discussion, everyone's points has been noted and a follow up note will be sent to Ms Fleming, but also to the PCC's office.

## **7. THE PROPOSED POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S PRECEPT**

The Commissioner provided a summary of his budget and proposed precept.

The panel had previously provided detailed questions to the Commissioner on the budget and precept. The questions can be found at appendix B.

The Commissioner and his Chief Finance officer responded to the questions during the meeting. The written responses to those questions provided by the Commissioner can be found at appendix C.

### **Additional questions asked from the Panel during the meeting:**

Cllr SM:

Opened the questions to the Panel, indicating further clarification would be sought around investment, growth and the medium term financial plan. She also noted that there were bigger topics such as prevention first which would need to be tabled at another meeting.

Cllr AC:

Why have you moved from a zero based budgeting system to a priorities based system?

IR:

Zero based budgeting looks at your current delivery and how much that is costing you. We are moving towards looking at our cost drivers, the number of transactions that are driving our cost base. We may use a hybrid of the two, we will take external expert advice on the best approach.

Other forces have found it beneficial. This is a pilot exercise for one year to recalibrate the budget.

Dr MR:

The budget is mostly spent on officers and other staff. We don't know how those officers are prioritising their time, we don't know where the focus really is. An occasional snap shot to understand what the real priorities have been would yield a lot of information.

Secondly, no meaningful information has been given on changing levels and types of crime. Yes, officer numbers are increasing but maybe crime is becoming more complex and varied, resulting in a need for more officers who are able to deal with those types of crime, e.g. cybercrime.

DL:

The Panel is here to look at the precept not the budget, although I accept they are inextricably linked. The issues you have raised are looked at very closely by the Chief constable.

Cllr SN:

The budget provides that there will be 30 officers dedicated to "prevention first" as the nature of crime is changing it would be nice to ensure that all officers are provided with the relevant training on prevention in addition to their regular training. Will officer's initial training be amended to account for this strategic change?

Secondly, Morale in Hertfordshire Police is low, but there is nothing in the report specifically related to improving morale. If the number of officers increases but low morale is not addressed then those officers may leave.

DL:

I disagree that morale is low. A police survey was undertaken and the Chief Constable has taken those results on board. I am confident in the way the Chief Constable is leading the force.

All new officers need to be fit for independent patrol, they will go through their normal training and then there is the unique approach in Hertfordshire which will be based around prevention first.

Cllr SN:

The Diversity and inclusion team mentioned in the report is a fantastic first step but the scope of that team seems to be very narrow.

- I think it is important that diversity and inequality issues are tackled outside of the force.
- The perceived lad culture in the force and the need to ensure female officers feel that they are supported and have access to support.
- When it comes to the report – road policing is not mentioned, are there plans to increase it.

DL:

I do not recognise the culture you refer to within the Hertfordshire force.

This is not a starting point around diversity and inclusion, this is the continuation of a long process that we have had around ensuring we have a constabulary which is diverse and inclusive.

I listen very carefully to what the Chief Constable says he needs around roads policing. I also listen to the public. Initiatives such as speed watch and extra camera vehicles, make the public feel safer.

Cllr AS: Made general comments about the report

- The Panel would have appreciated more in the report explaining what prevention first was.
- The new qualification of officers to reach degree level, is very good.
- Training new recruits during Covid must have been challenging.
- How has the need to buddie new officers been managed?

DL:

The qualification reflects the level of professionalism with in the force.

During Covid training has continued and actually increased.

The planners within the constabulary have done a great job of balancing the need to accommodate buddies for new officers.

IL:

In terms of the Police, how many Police Officers will there be extra on the streets.

DL: There will be an extra 77 more frontline officers on the streets of Hertfordshire with this budget.

### **Vote**

Cllr SM: invited the Panel to vote on the precept budget.

The Panel voted not to veto the precept, with one abstention

The Panel then voted to accept the precept without amendment, with one abstention.

Cllr SM: confirmed that following scrutiny and extensive questioning of the Commissioner the Panel had voted in favour of accepting the precept without amendment.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Cllr CW:

What was the impact on Hertfordshire Policing in keeping the county safe following the police national computer deletion and loss of some 400,000 records? How many of those records lost relate to Herts offenders and what measure have been taken to build in future resilience?

DL:

I am briefed on this regularly and I am reassured by the work of the National Gold Group. There will be a further statement in the House early next week by the Policing Minister. I would like to reassure the public that we have taken appropriate action in Hertfordshire.

## **9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 7:00PM TBC**