



MEETING OF HERTFORDSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Thursday 19 July 2012
Campus West
Welwyn Garden City

Present: Councillor M Alexander, East Herts District Council
Councillor Mrs A Brewster, St Albans
Councillor Mrs T Cowley, North Herts District Council
Councillor R Hannam, Broxbourne Borough Council
Councillor N Harden, Dacorum Borough Council
Councillor P Ruffles, Hertfordshire County Council
Councillor Mrs S Taylor, Stevenage Council
Mayor D Thornhill, Watford Borough Council
Councillor S Gaygusuz, (Substitute member) St Albans Council
Councillor C Goldstein, Hertsmere Council

Also Present: J Bugg, Home Office
C Conway, Welwyn Hatfield Council
D Currie, Herts Police Authority
G Miles, Broxbourne Borough Council
Councillor R Smith, Herts Police Authority
M J Walker, Broxbourne Borough Council
A White, Herts Police Authority

Apologies Councillor M Bright, Hertsmere Borough Council
Councillor J Dean, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
Councillor A Franey Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
Councillor D Scudder, Watford Borough Council
Councillor R Seabourne, Three Rivers District Council

1 INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

A welcome was extended to all participating authorities.

2 OVERVIEW OF PREPARATIONS FOR THE PANEL

The panel was briefed by Councillor Richard Smith and Mr Andrew White of the Hertfordshire Police Authority and Mr Jonny Bugg of the Home Office.

Among the issues raised, the panel was advised while the panel's primary role will be scrutiny of the Police and Crime Commissioner, and the balance require between that function and a more positive role could be difficult to achieve, the complementary and supporting nature of the panel's relation with the Commissioner will be important elements in fulfilling the panel's role effectively.

The importance of securing strong public engagement and effective communication with the public to the successful fulfilment of the panel's role was also stressed. The Panel will need to give early consideration to both these issues.

The "learning curve" facing the panel in the first year of its operation will be steep. However, attention was drawn to the value of building on successful working relationships in Hertfordshire with the existing community safety partnerships, the probation service and the criminal justice system.

As both the panel and the commissioner's role are new and different from the closest model of the Mayor of London, the Panel needs to appreciate that its role will evolve over time.

In its induction and training, the value of panel members in utilising the strong and positive relationship with the Police Authority, the work of the Transitions Board and the support of the Chief Constable for the new arrangements was stressed.

It was agreed to circulate the Police Plan to members of the panel and prepare an aide memoire for members of the public on the role of the panel in relation to that of the Commissioner.

3 JOINT ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE PANEL

The panel was advised that all eleven Hertfordshire authorities had endorsed the joint arrangements which had been submitted to the Home Office by its deadline of 16 July. The panel was a duly constituted joint committee of the eleven Hertfordshire authorities, (and the only such formal joint committee operating across all of the County area).

4 APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON

The panel appointed Councillor Ray Hannam, Broxbourne Borough Council, as interim Chairperson and Councillor Malcolm Alexander, East Herts District Council, as interim vice chairperson.

5 TERMS OF REFERENCE AND RULES OF PROCEDURE

The panel approved the draft terms of reference, with the additional provision of reviewing any proposal to suspend the Chief Constable or to require him or her to resign or retire, and rules of procedure.

The Panel endorsed the principle of providing for public participation at its meetings, and asked officers to incorporate appropriate means in the rules of procedure.

The Panel asked that the Panel's scope to appoint its chairman from the appointed and co-opted membership be kept under review.

The Panel undertook to review both in twelve months time.

6 APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT CO-OPTED MEMBERS

The panel agreed to commence recruitment of up to four independent members through an open recruitment process. The panel agreed to ask the County Labour party to nominate an additional Labour elected member, preferably drawn from a geographic area which is not at present represented on the panel by a Labour member.

The panel agreed to delegate the short listing and interview of candidates to a subgroup of members consisting of Councillors Peter Ruffles, Sharon Taylor, Annie Brewster and Mayor Dorothy Thornhill.

The panel asked that existing police authority members, parish councils, youth councils and the services engaged with community reassurance and the criminal justice system be advised of the opportunity for cooption.

7 PANEL TRAINING

The panel agreed that its training and induction be arranged as a training day, focused on the Panel's principal responsibilities for the review of the Police Plan and budget/precept responsibilities. The panel asked that the date of the training session be arranged after the forthcoming party annual conferences and that the training be offered to co-opted and substitute members of the Panel too.

8 WORK PLANNING

The panel agreed to meet again before the Commissioner's election in November, at a date to be fixed. Whilst recognising the difficulty of finding a time for its meetings which will meet the needs of all members of the Panel, it was agreed to meet in the evening at 7.00pm. The Panel asked that a schedule of proposed meetings be drawn up for the next twelve months. The Panel noted the offers of a venue for future meetings from St Albans City Council and East Herts District Council.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be fixed following confirmation of the date of the proposed training day and the programme of recruitment of co-opted members of the panel.

Points of Contact

Any questions or queries regarding the panel and its administration should be referred to the host authority officers indicated below:

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