



**WATFORD**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL



# MEETING OF HERTFORDSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Thursday 7 November 2024 – 6 pm

**Broxbourne Council**  
**Bishops' College,**  
**Churchgate, Cheshunt**  
**Hertfordshire EN8 9XQ**

## MINUTES

<b>Members Present:</b>	Cllr A Curtis	Broxbourne Borough Council (Chair)
	Dr M Ramsay	Independent Member (Vice Chair)
	Cllr A Scarth	Three Rivers District Council
	Cllr R Ranger	Hertfordshire County Council
	Cllr T Plater	Stevenage Borough Council
	Cllr R Townsend	East Herts District Council
	Dr Julian Hargreaves	Independent Member
	Mr Mark Jackson	Independent Member

<b>Also Present</b>	Mr Jonathan Ash-Edwards, Police and Crime Commissioner
	Mr Gavin Miles, Deputy Chief Executive PCC
	Ian Rooney, PCC Chief Financial Officer
	Mrs Nathalie Boateng, Clerk to the PCP
	Mr Ibrahim Balta, Deputy Clerk to the PCP

**Please note these minutes are a summary of the discussion and are not intended to be verbatim.**

### 1 WELCOME

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

### 2 APOLOGIES

Councillors Chesterman, Bryant, Dychton, Gray, Pringle, and Sherlock.

### 3 CONFIRMATION OF THE APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

Dr Julian Hargreaves and Mr Mark Jackson were confirmed as Independent Members.

### 4 WELCOME OF NEW INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

The Panel's new Independent Members were welcomed to the Panel. Dr Julian Hargreaves and Mr Mark Jackson introduced themselves giving a summary of their background and experience.

**5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 25 JULY 2024**

The minutes of the meeting on 25 July 2024 were agreed.

**6. MATTERS ARISING**

None

**7. QUESTIONS TO THE PANEL FROM THE PUBLIC**

None

**8. QUESTIONS TO THE PCC FROM THE PUBLIC**

None

**9. HMICFRS REPORT**

The Commissioner gave a summary of his response to the report. PCC would be meeting the Chief Constable next week about the report. PCC advised that the inspections were taking place across the Country and there was a broad theme coming through. There's a strong link between funding of the Police forces and the inspection findings. Not to diminish the findings of the report, however he noted that the forces with more funding are having better inspection findings.

**Recording of crime**

Dr Ramsay commented that the Hertfordshire Police force is young and inexperienced, what are the arrangements for officers to seek help within the constabulary, are personnel trained in this area.

PCC confirmed there were staff trained for this. Explained that the problem areas highlighted in the report could be divided into two areas: -1) admin 2) investigative/strategic issues. Regarding the admin issues, the PCC acknowledged that there was work to be done, which was underway. There will be a Peer review to gauge progress on improvements. There will be a reinspection in the spring by the HMICFRS. Regarding the Investigative/Strategic findings, this related to the recording of secondary offences, although important, they have less impact.

Cllr Scarth commented that the recording of crime should be simplified.

Cllr Townsend, asked for clarification around the automation of crime recording.

PCC explained that when a crime is reported, the details are written in the log, which sometimes are not translated into the crime records. There are many different systems for logging, some are quite old, which is a challenge for officers. There is a cultural aspect also, currently a crime is recorded if the person reporting thinks there has been a crime.

M Jackson – asked about the non recording of rape cases, enquiring whether the victims received support and the risk this might pose to the force.

PCC – the non-recording referred to often occurred in the context of an existing safeguarding case, the non-recording in these cases were often subsequent incidences related to an existing safeguarding case.

M Jackson, asked about training plans.

PCC, confirm that 350 staff had been trained so far, the plan is to train 1,100 staff. There had been briefings on stalking and harassment, five modules on rape and sexual offences.

Cllr Plater, referred to data handling, and asked how the force is handling data, is there going to be extra training for the force on this.

PCC, yes, this is part of the training that will be going ahead over the next few months. There is a broader question around the strategic use of data, to drive priorities in policing, in some areas it is used well and others are patchy.

Dr Hargreaves, referred to the equalities data, what are your plans for improvements in this area.

PCC, this arose because some of the protected characteristics are not mandatory fields on the forms being filled in and therefore were left blank.

Dr Hargreaves asked about what protected characteristics were not recorded.

Cllr Plater confirmed from the HMI report that age and gender were recorded well, race, not so well and others hardly at all.

Cllr Townsend made a comment about the difficulties of obtaining responses to questions on protected characteristics.

PCC acknowledged this difficulty and mentioned in the control room he had witnessed the challenge of getting this information from members of the public calling in to report a crime.

***It was agreed that a visit to the control room should be arranged for the Panel.***

Cllr Townsend, referred to the loss of officers across the constabulary and asked what had been done about this.

PCC, we have a young work force, we have had good results where possible to move staff to different roles rather than lose them. I see the figures on a monthly basis and do not consider it is a cause for huge concern.

Cllr Curtis asked whether the PCC could give the Panel some assurance that the PCC will follow all the recommendations in the report.

PCC confirmed that they are in the process of implementing all the recommendations.

Cllr Curtis, asked for assurance that the time sensitive recommendations would be undertaken within the timescales.

PCC confirmed they were all in hand.

### **Responding to the Public**

Cllr Scarth commented that it appeared there had not been improvement in this area from the last report.

PCC, said responding to the public is key, he disagreed with the Inspectorate on this finding. Noted that no force in the country currently meets the standard. I would prefer if the Inspectorates reviews were broader. Referenced the low number of complaints over the last year against call handling.

Cllr Plater asked how improvement could be ensured.

PCC indicated that he will be putting a lot of time into improvements and was confident that the next inspection would reflect this.

Cllr Plater, updating callers about delays has been identified as an area for improvement, can you give assurance this will be one of your areas for improvement.

PCC, confirmed this was a priority, advised that 'prompt manager roles' had been created as a pilot, which he would keep a close eye on; technology would also be utilised to improve this area.

Cllr Townsend asked about the crime recording where a member of the public flags down a Police officer.

PCC clarified that the inspection was heavily focussed on calls to the control room. In the case where a Police officer is approached directly, they have a system for logging these reports.

Cllr Curtis asked whether call handlers are trained to give advice on crime prevention and the protection of evidence.

PCC agreed some of this is about training and consistency. Discussed that crime prevention could be automated which would help consistency.

***Cllr Plater asked the PCC for a report on cyber security to be brought to a future meeting of the PCC.***

## **Protecting Vulnerable People**

PCC confirmed that protecting vulnerable people was a clear part of his Police and Crime Plan.

Dr Hargreaves asked what the PCC perceived the problem to be.

PCC said it was around officers being pro-active, in ongoing areas ensuring that there are resources around this area, this will be included in the Plan.

M Jackson, asked about the backlog in this area and the risk around whether anyone had been victimised while waiting.

***PCC undertook to come back to the Panel with the precise figures around the backlog.***

PCC with regard the victimisation point; it is incredibly difficult to get clarity on that.

## **Leadership and Force Management**

Cllr Plater are there plans to continue the work between the force and multi agencies.

PCC yes, confirmed he would like it to continue.

Dr Ramsay asked about the use of the force surveys.

PCC said there is an annual survey and police federation survey and confirmed use would be made of the findings when the results are out.

Dr Hargreaves noted the 10 to 15% response rate. He thought the assumption of the report into the nonresponses was an incorrect inference.

Cllr Curtis, asked for updates on what the PCC were doing in response to the report and to ensure all the recommendations were implemented.

Cllr Ranger commented that an investment in technology would deal with a lot of the issues identified in the report.

PCC agreed with Cllr Ranger and advised that there would be a lot in the precept budget report about this.

### **10. AOB**

None

### **11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING 21 NOVEMBER 2024 AT EAST HERTS DISTRICT COUNCIL**

