



Norfolk Police and Crime Panel

Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 February 2020 at 10am in the Edwards Room, County Hall, Norwich

Members Present:

Cllr William Richmond (Chairman)	Norfolk County Council
Air Commodore Kevin Pellatt (Vice-Chairman)	Co-opted Independent Member
Cllr Tim Adams	North Norfolk District Council
Cllr Michael Edney	South Norfolk District Council
Mr Peter Hill	Co-opted Independent Member
Cllr Kevin Maguire	Norwich City Council
Cllr Colin Manning	Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council
Cllr Mike Smith-Clare	Great Yarmouth Borough Council
Cllr Martin Storey	Norfolk County Council

Officers/Others Present:

Mr Greg Insull	Assistant Head of Democratic Services, Norfolk County Council (NCC)
Mrs Jo Martin	Democratic Support and Scrutiny Team Manager, NCC
Mr Harvey Bullen	Assistant Director of Finance
Mr Simon Bailey	Chief Constable
Mr Lorne Green	Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Norfolk
Ms Sharon Lister	Director of Performance and Scrutiny, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk (OPCCN)
Ms Jill Penn	Chief Finance Officer, OPCCN
Dr Gavin Thompson	Director of Policy and Commissioning, OPCCN
Mr Mark Stokes	Chief Executive, OPCCN

1. To receive apologies and details of any substitute Members attending

- 1.1 Apologies had been received from Cllr Stuart Clancy. Also absent were Cllr Gordon Bambridge and Cllr Sarah Butikofer.

2. Minutes

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2019 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

3. Members to declare Interests

3.1 No interests were declared.

4. To receive any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency

4.1 The Chairman confirmed that there was no urgent business, but that he wished to take the opportunity to pay tribute to Brian Hannah who had sadly died in December 2019. Brian was County Councillor for Sheringham from June 2001 to May 2017. He was a member of the Police and Crime Panel when it was first established in 2012, and during subsequent years he held both main member and substitute member positions, with a year as Vice-Chairman, until he stood down from the county council in 2017. The Chairman paid tribute to Brian's contribution to the Panel, saying that both his passionate commitment to public service and professional background helped ensure the Panel understood its role and delivered its responsibilities to the local community. The Panel stood for a minute's silence.

5. Public Questions

5.1 No public questions had been received.

6. Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Norfolk's proposed police precept for 2020-21

6.1 The Panel received the report outlining the budget and financial impact of the three 2020/21 precept options upon which the PCC had consulted and the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2020/21 to 2023/24 including the Capital Programme, together with various Financial Strategies that must be published by the PCC.

6.2 The PCC introduced the report (see Appendix A of these minutes) and confirmed that he proposed to raise the police precept by 3.95% (an increase of £9.99 per year, which equated to £263.07 for a Band D property).

6.3 The Chief Constable gave further information to introduce the precept funding report:

- Following the Prime Minister's announcement of funding for 20,000 additional police officers in England and Wales, the first tranche of funding had been confirmed. The Chief Constable was expecting to employ 67 officers before March 2021 and in total approximately 200 officers with this funding. With the new training and qualification requirements, the new recruits and some existing officers would be required to complete the 3-year policing degree. Taking into account officers who would leave the force and retire, up to 600 new officers would need to be recruited. That would mean a third of the organisation would have less than three year's service, resulting in a young organisation with young leaders who would have to deal with policing that was becoming far more complex and demanding.
- 999 demand had increased by 86,500 calls in-between 2012-19 and the profile and length of calls had changed in this time; 101 calls had also seen an increase in call time and volume, with an increase of 23% in calls related to mental health and an 83% increase in calls related to domestic abuse in this same time period.

- The Chief Constable noted the shift in policing demand over the years by highlighting that there were fewer than 5 burglaries per day in the whole of Norfolk compared to 65 calls per day about domestic abuse. The precept uplift would help reduce some of the demand pressures in the control room, enable more officers to be in detective roles, increase officer support in the switchboard to support 101, increase crime recording capability and bolster the capacity of the mental health and domestic abuse teams in the control room.
- The medium-term financial plan indicated that there was still a significant deficit for the constabulary to overcome. The challenge around efficiency and effectiveness would continue but unless the outcome of the Spending Review provided a significant increase in future Government funding for the Constabulary it was inevitable that he would need to lobby for a further precept rise next year.

6.4 The PCC concluded that without a precept increase, cuts would be needed; with a 2% increase, only inflation related cost pressures could be covered; with a 3.95% increase, inflation related cost pressures could be covered and investment in mental health support in the control room, additional resources in 101 services and domestic abuse safeguards and support could be funded.

6.5 The following points were discussed and noted:

- The Chief Constable confirmed that the 67 new officers would be funded through the first tranche of uplift funding provided by government. However, other officers would need to be recruited to replace those who were due to retire in Norfolk and this would be funded by the precept increase. Over the next three years, the Government uplift would provide for 220-225 additional officers. There were a lot of unknowns in respect of the grant conditions, but it was inevitable that the force would be expected to demonstrate the impact of the additional 67 to be recruited in the first tranche.
- Members asked the PCC whether a precept rise of 3.95% year on year would lift the service out of deficit; the PCC could not guarantee that this scenario would address the deficit due to unforeseen future demand pressures and more information was needed on funding commitments from government.
- The PCC gave information on the early intervention and preventative services being run through his office, in partnership with other bodies, to prevent people from going into crime.
- The Chief Finance Officer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk (OPCCN), confirmed that the financial situation of Norfolk Constabulary had been modelled moving forward using the 2% precept rise; after modelling it had been concluded that to eliminate the deficit, a combination of a higher precept rise and higher funding from the funding formula would be needed.
- Concerns raised by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) regarding quality of crime reporting was raised; the Chief Constable confirmed that the force had made a conscious decision to try to invest in the organisation and get this right. Crime recording was complex. The report highlighted the outstanding leadership, however, despite best efforts to get to 93%/94% accuracy (the national benchmark) he would need to invest in his Quality Assurance Team to improve. He would prefer to invest in the frontline, but there was no choice as the Inspectorate will reassess.
- There was a plateauing of calls related to domestic abuse and antisocial behaviour. However, the highest demand facing the organisation was still around domestic abuse and the precept increase would be used to enhance the

response.

- The Panel asked about the detail behind the consultation response theme on “The police need to better manage finance”, which OPCCN agreed to provide separately. The Chief Finance Officer, OPCCN, reassured the Panel that financial management was good; accounts and budgets were managed well and visible online, and reserves were sufficient to cover known pressures.
- The Panel asked for information on measures in place to combat rural crime; the PCC reported on rural beat managers, drones and the engagement measures specific to rural crime which had been put in place. Rural engagement meetings were held across the county and feedback from the farming community had been positive. The Chief Constable anticipated that approximately 100 of the 200 additional officers who would be recruited through the government uplift would be community based, and a proportion of these would be involved in rural crime prevention and teams.
- The Chairman asked about the focus of regional collaboration; the PCC reported that the collaborative work of the 7 forces was focussed on procurement and ICT. They were also looking into joining up responses to firearms and firearms training and licencing. Further opportunities that could be taken were being investigated. While it was one of the most advance collaboration arrangements in the country the benefits would be seen in the next few years.
- The public’s perceptions around visible policing was discussed. The Chief Constable reported that the biggest risk of crime to most people in most communities in Norfolk was online crime such as fraud and investing resources to tackle that type of complex crime required something different to the out-of-date view of seeing officers walking the streets of local communities; North Norfolk, for example, was one of the safest districts in England and it was unlikely the community would see new officers on the beat as a result of the uplift as there would be little work for an officer in that area to do. It was a challenge to overcome the perception of police visibility. Not seeing officers in a local community was good news, it meant there was nothing to worry about. The Panel was encouraged to reinforce that message.
- The Chief Constable confirmed that the force was very good at managing the impact of major incidents. Every day, it managed threat, harm and risk and officers regularly worked outside of county to support major incidents. The force was very good at flexing, surging and withdrawing resources to support unplanned demand. Nationally, the police service was good at dealing with large incidents and locally, through resilience forums, training of officers and planning, the police was able to cope with most things. The country should be proud of the service the police was able to provide, particularly on those occasions.
- The Chairman pointed out that on pages 39-40 of the report, the commissioning budget was shown as decreasing in 2020-21; the Director of Policy and Commissioning, OPCCN, agreed to double check these figures as the budget should be static at £1.047 per year.
- It was clarified that the spend on the Broadland Gate investigation hub was higher as it was double the size of the Swaffham hub and the cost of purchasing land there was higher.
- The Panel queried the level of reserves and whether they should be increased. The Chief Finance Officer, OPCCN, confirmed the reserves had been reviewed and were above the minimum legal level and met the financial strategy. The current policy of the PCC was to maintain the general reserve between 2.5% - 3% of net revenue budget and total reserves at 6% net budget as a minimum

- 6.6 The Panel:
- **Noted** the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk's Revenue Budget and Capital Programme for 2020/21, the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2020/21 to 2023/24, and the funding and financial strategies,
 - **Voted** unanimously to support the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk's proposed precept increase of 3.95% for 2020/21, and
 - **Agreed** that the Chairman should write to the Commissioner to formally report the outcome of the Panel's consideration of the precept proposal.

7. Police and Crime Plan for Norfolk 2016-2020 – performance monitoring

- 7.1 The Panel received the report providing an overview of the progress made against delivering two of the strategic priorities within the Norfolk Police and Crime Plan for 2016-2020 (Priority 1, increase visible policing, and Priority 4, prevent offending).
- 7.2 The following points were discussed and noted
- The Panel asked whether the man hours utilised on internet crime could be shown in the reported data; the Chief Constable reported that there were teams dedicated to tackling online child sexual exploitation and officers dedicated to investigating online financial fraud; tracking the hours they committed to this work would be difficult. The force was currently committed to removing some levels of bureaucracy to ensure that the maximum resource was dedicated to tackling crime.
 - It was not clear why Great Yarmouth had the greatest number of online crimes; the Chief Constable agreed to find out more information and provide a written answer to Cllr Smith-Clare.
 - The Chief Constable agreed to find out more information on levels of bike crime in Norwich Mancroft ward and provide a written answer to Cllr Smith-Clare.
 - The Chief Constable reported that through prioritising support for County Lines, there was a greater understanding of the levels of addiction in the county and that more support was needed for addiction services.
 - There had been an uplift across the county in recruitment of special constables and recruitment was targeting local people.
 - 'New' crimes such as female genital mutilation, slavery and child exploitation were becoming more common. The face of policing and the public's perception around risks of crime in Norfolk was changing.
 - The importance of partnership working across agencies to tackle county lines was noted.
 - Mr Hill raised a concern that the questions used in the Warwick-Edinburgh mental wellbeing chart shown in the report were not correct; the Director of Policy and Commissioning, OPCCN, agreed to discuss this with Mr Hill after the meeting.
- 7.3 The Panel **noted** the update about progress with delivering the Police and Crime Plan for Norfolk 2016-2020.

8. PCC Complaints Monitoring Report

- 8.1 The Panel received the report setting out monitoring reports of complaints and detailing the number and themes of complaints handled during the period.

8.2 The Panel **noted** the regular monitoring information from the Police and Crime Commissioner's Chief Executive and Norfolk County Council's Head of Democratic Services about complaints relating to the conduct of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk.

9. Information bulletin – questions arising to the PCC

9.1 The Panel received the report giving a summary of both the decisions taken by the PCC and the range of his activity since the last Panel meeting.

9.2 The PCC drew Members' attention to the estates review being undertaken in particular the proposed purchase of Hethersett Old School and clarified that bids for sites did not form part of the increased precept funding.

9.3 The Panel welcomed the extension of the Chief Constable's contract.

9.4 The Panel **noted** the information bulletin

10. Work Programme

10.1 The Panel **agreed** the proposed work programme.

10.2 Members noted that the Local Government Association would be running its annual PCP workshop on the 18 March 2020, ahead of PCC elections instead of during the summer. The Democratic Support and Scrutiny Team Manager would circulate details as soon as they were available, but anyone interested in attending was encouraged to put their name forward in the meantime.

Meeting ended at 11.28

**Mr William Richmond, Chairman,
Norfolk Police and Crime Panel**



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Budget notes - Intro

Chairman, Panel Members, you will have heard me say before that setting the policing budget and making the decision whether to raise the policing element of Council Tax is one of the most difficult parts of my role.

It is not a proposal I ever take lightly.

I remain sensitive to the financial pressures on the taxpayers of Norfolk when coming to my conclusion.

As ever, it is my duty to balance the burden on local taxpayers with the safety of our county.

The role of the PCCs is to be the voice of the people and hold the police to account. Alongside my formal governance arrangements, I have been committed to an extensive public engagement strategy throughout the year.

This has included regular public Q & A's in each of the respective local authority areas, together with the Chief Constable engaging directly with local people. I have also, on the request of the Police & Crime Panel, attended a number of Council Scrutiny Panels.

There has been a recurring theme throughout our county, tackling anti-social behaviour, 101 call times and the impacts of mental health on policing.

I have also undertaken an extensive 5-week consultation across the county. A key part of that activity has been to give people the opportunity to influence local policing priorities where they live, and to seek their views on the policing element of Council tax going forward.

I have listened to the views of the community, the Chief Constable, key stakeholders and partners in the police, community safety and local criminal justice arenas.

The results of the consultation show that:

- Of the 918 respondents to the survey, 548 individuals preferred option was to increase the precept
- This equates to 59.8% in support of a precept increase
- Of the 548 individuals who supported an increase in the precept, 68.2% were willing to pay more than an above inflation increase.

The report attached provides a more detailed breakdown.

With your permission, I would like to invite the Chief Constable to give a brief overview of the demand/resource equation for our constabulary as he has put it to me.

I should say that when demands exceed resources, I look first to see what efficiency savings the Chief can make to close the gap

And then I will turn to my resultant considerations and conclusion.

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Conclusion

The realities facing the Constabulary are very challenging, without an increase in the precept, this would result in the Constabulary needing to make more cuts in key areas of its budget to enable it to fund the growing cost of providing policing services and balance its budget.

As my consultation explains, even with an increase of 2% the Constabulary would be 'treading water only' to meet inflation-related cost pressures and would not be able to invest in and improve the broader services it provides to Norfolk communities.

I do understand however, no one likes to pay more for less. I have heard our Norfolk community say in convincing numbers that they are prepared to pay more for policing but they want to see more policing for their money.

To support a 3.95% increase this year, I would however be able to provide new funding of £3m to the Constabulary. This would meet not only inflation related cost pressures but also provides additional resources to meet the real and pressing need of the Constabulary beyond the additional officer numbers funded by Central Government. It will allow us to invest in and improve services in the following areas:

- ✓ More Investment in Mental Health support in the Control Room
- ✓ Additional resources in 101 service to improve response times and in this regard I am mindful of the importance of ASB
- ✓ Resources to provide Domestic Abuse Safeguarding support

I have taken into account the feedback I have received from Norfolk's communities, Norfolk Constabulary, key organisations and partner agencies and I have concluded that the public safety of our county can best be assured through the budget proposed today – a budget which allows me to invest further in policing both now and in the future.

I therefore recommend to the Panel an increase in the Policing portion of Council Tax by 3.95%.