

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AND CRIME PANEL HELD ON 18 OCTOBER 2021 14:00 HOURS – WOLVERHAMPTON CIVIC CENTRE**

### **PRESENT: -**

Cllr Paul Bradley – Dudley  
Cllr Daniel Gibbin - Solihull  
Cllr Jasbir Jaspal – Wolverhampton  
Cllr Richard Jones – Sandwell  
Kristina Murphy - Independent Member  
Cllr Waheed Rasab - Walsall  
Cllr Suky Samra – Walsall  
Cllr Salma Suleman - Birmingham  
Lionel Walker – Independent Member

Cllr Gurmeet Singh Sohal (Observing)

### **ALSO PRESENT: -**

Simon Foster – West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner  
Jonathan Jardine –Chief Executive, OPCC  
Representatives of the OPCC  
Kevin O’Keefe – Chief Executive Dudley MBC, Panel Lead Officer  
Emma Williamson – Head of Scrutiny, Birmingham City Council  
Sarah Fradgley– Panel Scrutiny Officer

### **600 NOTICE OF RECORDING**

The Chair announced that the meeting would be livestreamed and recorded for subsequent broadcast via the Wolverhampton Council’s meeting portal and that members of the press and public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

### **601 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for non-attendance were received on behalf of Cllr Abdul Khan (Coventry), Cllr Rajbir Singh (Sandwell), Cllr Mick Brown (Birmingham), and Cllr Yvonne Clements (Solihull).

### **602 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None declared.

### **603 POLICE AND CRIME PANEL MEMBERSHIP**

The Panel noted that Cllr Salma Suleman, representing Birmingham City Council, had been appointed to the Police and Crime Panel for the 2021-2022 Municipal Year. The Chair welcome Cllr Suleman to the meeting.

### **RESOLVED: -**

**That the appointment of Cllr Salma Suleman (Birmingham) to the Police and Crime Panel for 2021/2022 be noted.**

#### **604 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

**RESOLVED: -**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.**

#### **605 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No public questions had been submitted.

#### **606 WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AND CRIME PLAN 2021-25 – PANEL REVIEW OF DRAFT PLAN**

The Chair invited Simon Foster West Midlands Police to present his draft Police and Crime Plan for 2021-2025. He asked the Panel submit its response to him by Friday 22 October, so he could publish the final document on Tuesday 26 October.

The Commissioner explained the plan was based on the key themes of his election manifesto. He summarised the different sections of the plan and the aims and objectives included within them. The Commissioner outlined the consultation undertaken to inform the plan, advising that over 4600 responses had been submitted.

Panel Members asked the Commissioner a range of questions and discussed the points it would make as part of the Panel's statutory review of the draft Police and Crime. The following discussion points were raised:

- The Panel welcomed the metrics contained throughout the Plan to enable progress towards the delivery of priorities and impact to be assessed.
- A suggestion was made that the baselines be included alongside terms used in the report such as 'increasing', 'reducing', 'historically' to inform the public of the starting points.
- The Panel discussed the setting of targets and acknowledged targets must be carefully considered so not to yield unintended results.
- Members undertook to forward questions relating to specific targets within the Plan directly to the PCC for a detailed response.
- The Panel was pleased to hear about the wide-ranging consultation undertaken to inform the Plan.
- The Panel welcomed the focus of the Plan on improving public confidence in the police, in particular the rebuilding of community policing and the implementation of the Fairness and Belonging programme.
- Following comments about the public accessibility of the document of this nature and how the Plan could be communicated in different ways, the Commissioner welcomed the suggestion that an accessible summary version of the plan be created. Setting out the plan objectives short-term, medium-term, and long-term would offer a simplified overview to the public.
- The Panel welcomed the Commissioner's commitment to quarterly monitoring of progress and asked to receive copies of these regular monitoring reports to inform the Panel on progress, outcomes and the impact against priorities.

Examination of the Plan provide an opportunity discuss a number of key policing and crime issues:

- The Commissioner was asked how many BME officers had recently attended the police Strategic Command Course, as this was the key mechanism for appointment to senior, decision-making positions in the force. The PCC acknowledged the importance of career progression and retention to achieving a force representative of its community. It was noted

that Matt Ward Assistant Chief Constable and Baz Javid, now Met Deputy Assistant Commissioner, had taken the course.

- Responding to a question about work with suicide prevention partners, the meeting was informed that PCC was a partner on the WM Combined Authority Mental Health Commission and his role focused on reducing the trauma experienced in the criminal justice system and so reducing suicide. This included sentencing and the use of Mental Health Treatment Referrals and other orders, the WMP response to those in mental health crisis and children in custody before charge.
- Members welcomed the PCC's commitment to community policing. Some concern was expressed as to how the additional 450 community officers would be allocated. The PCC explained this was an operational policing decision, but officers would be distributed across the 8 Neighbourhood Policing areas with a focus on policing need and the 19 Impact Areas. Impact Areas had been identified through police demand and other social economical issues as requiring long term policing focus.
- The Panel asked how the PCC intended to further develop relationships to facilitate the necessary partnership work to achieve the plan objectives. The PCC assured the Panel that he would have personal oversight and scrutiny of partnerships as Chair of the West Midlands Community Safety Partnership, Chair of the West Midlands Criminal Justice Board, Chair of the Violence Reduction Unit, commissioning victims' services and his dedicated Victims' Commissioner.
- The PCC was thanked for his support of the LGBTQ+ community following recent attacks in Birmingham. He was asked what could be done to improve the confidence of victims to report Hate Crime incidents to the police. The PCC assured the meeting that Hate Crime would not be tolerated and acknowledged the personal impact it had on victims. He urged people to report to the police or to third party reporting centres across the west midlands. He would continue to hold WMP to account on bringing perpetrators to justice and commission victim support through the West Midlands Hate Crime Support Service. He invited members to contact him or the office if there was anything further that could be done, or improved.
- The PCC outlined how oversight of Stop and Search and the Use of Force was undertaken at a strategic level by his Policing and Crime Board and at a community level through Community Scrutiny Panels. Disappointment was expressed at the disproportionality of stop and searches and the impact this had on public confidence in the police. The PCC noted that a comprehensive plan was required to drive down disproportionality and the Fairness and Belonging Plan aimed to address equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- The development of employment and apprenticeship initiatives providing opportunities for young people was praised.
- Responding to a comment that the 101 non-emergency service was not fit for purpose, the PCC agreed the service needed to improve, and he intended to hold WMP to account against their services standards. He highlighted that the time to answer a call was not a measure of quality of service and the proposed national league table on call times could drive gaming. The PCC undertook to respond directly to questions raised about the retention of call centre staff, their deployment on 999 and 101 call handling and the ease of use of the Live Chat facility.

**RESOLVED: -**

- i. That the Panel report of Members' comments on the West Midlands Police and Crime Plan 2021-2025 be referred to the Police and Crime Commissioner by Friday 22 October 2021;**
- ii. A copy of the Panel report on the Police and Crime Plan be published on the Panel website; and**

- iii. **That the PCC be requested to provide the Panel with quarterly monitoring performance reports.**

**607 ESTATE STRATEGY REVIEW UPDATE**

The Panel received and noted the Chief Constable's report to the Police and Crime Commissioner that reviewed previous plans against 11 principles for the management of the police estate. The Commissioner advised that a further report would be presented to the November Strategic Board that applied the 11 principles against the existing police estate.

**RESOLVED: -**

**That the report be noted and the further update report be added to the Panel Work Programme.**

**608 KEY DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

**RESOLVED: -**

That the recent key decisions taken by the Police and Crime Commissioner be noted.

**609 PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2021/2022**

The Panel Work Programme was received and noted.

The Chair reported that the panel inquiry report into public confidence in policing was near completion and Commissioner committed to respond to the draft report by 22 November.

The Chair suggested the Chief Constable be invited to a future meeting and it was agreed the Panel would approach the Chief Constable directly. It was noted that the Chief Constable was keen to attend the Panel's precept session.

The Panel agreed to move the next panel meeting from 8 November to 29 November 2021.

**RESOLVED:-**

- I. **That the Chair write to the Chief Constable inviting him to attend a future panel meeting; and**
- II. **The next meeting of the Police and Crime be moved from 8 November to 29 November 2021.**

**610 EMMA WILLIAMSON – PANEL OFFICER**

The Panel joined the Chair in thanking Emma Williamson, Head of Scrutiny at Birmingham City Council, for the support she had given the Panel and wished her the best of luck in her new position at Cornwall Council.

The meeting ended at 15:30 hours

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CHAIR