

# HAMPSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

1pm – 7 April 2017

Held in Ashburton Hall, Winchester  
(Hampshire County Council)

## PRESENT

### **Councillors:**

#### Chairman

p David Stewart  
(Isle of Wight Council)

#### Vice Chairman

p Jan Warwick  
(Winchester City Council)

p John Beavis MBE  
(Gosport Borough Council)  
p Simon Bound  
(Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council)  
p Ken Carter  
(East Hampshire District Council)  
a Trevor Cartwright MBE  
(Fareham Borough Council)  
p Steve Clarke  
(New Forest District Council)  
a Tonia Craig  
(Eastleigh Borough Council)  
a Alison Johnston  
(Test Valley Borough Council)

p John Kennett  
(Hart District Council)  
a Peter Latham  
(Hampshire County Council)  
p Ian Lyon  
(Portsmouth City Council)  
a Ken Muschamp  
(Rushmoor Borough Council)  
a Jacqui Rayment  
(Southampton City Council)  
a Leah Turner  
(Havant Borough Council)

### **Co-opted Members:**

#### Independent Members

p Michael Coombes  
p Bob Purkiss MBE

#### Local Authority

a Reg Barry  
a Frank Rust  
p Lynne Stagg

### **At the invitation of the Chairman:**

James Payne  
Insp Phil Raymond  
Insp Louise Hubble  
Cllr Goff Beck

*Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner  
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner  
Hampshire Constabulary  
Representing the Hampshire Association of Local  
Councils (HALC)  
Representing the Hampshire Association of Local  
Councils (HALC)*

Cllr Jim MacDonald

## 72. **BROADCASTING ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Chairman announced that the press and members of the public were permitted to film and broadcast the meeting. Those remaining at the meeting were consenting to being filmed and recorded, and to the possible use of those images and recording for broadcasting purposes.

## 73. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting. A special welcome was provided to the external witnesses attending to present their evidence to the Panel.

## 74. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from:

- Councillor Reg Barry, Additional Local Authority Co-opted Member
- Councillor Trevor Cartwright, Fareham Borough Council
- Councillor Tonia Craig, Eastleigh Borough Council
- Councillor Alison Johnston, Test Valley Borough Council
- Councillor Peter Latham, Hampshire County Council
- Councillor Ken Muschamp, Rushmoor Borough Council
- Councillor Jacqui Rayment, Southampton City Council
- Councillor Frank Rust, Additional Local Authority Co-opted Member
- Councillor Leah Turner, Havant Borough Council

## 75. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were able to disclose to the meeting any disclosable pecuniary interest they may have in any matter on the agenda for the meeting, where that interest is not already entered in their appointing authority's register of interests, and any other pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in any such matter that Members may wish to disclose.

No declarations were made.

## 76. **MINUTES**

The Minutes from the 27 January 2017 proactive scrutiny session were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## 77. **SESSION ONE: DOMESTIC ABUSE - RESPONSE FROM THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

The Police and Crime Commissioner's (hereafter referred to as

'the Commissioner') comments on the recommendations from the 'domestic abuse' proactive scrutiny final report were noted.

RESOLVED:

That the Commissioners response is noted and published on the Panel's website.

78. **SESSION TWO: RESTORATIVE JUSTICE – RECOMMENDATIONS**

The final draft of the outcomes and recommendations from the 'restorative justice' proactive scrutiny was presented before the Panel, by the Police and Crime Plan working group.

It was heard that the Police and Crime Plan working group had presented the outcome of the review in a revised format, to bring more direct focus upon the Panel's recommendations and to deliver a saving against officer time, which will be available to support other areas of the Panel's work.

The Panel commended the new format and agreed that the letter summarised well the oral and written evidence received.

RESOLVED:

That the outcomes and recommendations from the 'restorative justice' proactive scrutiny are agreed, and sent to the Commissioner for his response to the Panel's recommendations.

79. **SESSION THREE: RURAL CRIME**

Members heard that this was the third session of the Panel's work programme for 2016/17, and the proactive scrutiny would be focused on the topic of 'rural crime'. A scope for this review (see Appendix 1 to Item 7 in the Minute Book) had been agreed by the Plan working group, who had written to stakeholders in the previous weeks to collate evidence (see Appendix 2 and 3 to Item 7 in the Minute Book). The Chairman noted the breadth of written evidence which had been provided to the review, including responses from local town and parish councils, members of the public and other organisations.

The key questions asked of witnesses were:

- How well have the Commissioner and his office worked with organisations engaged in the prevention of rural crime to foster partnership working and increase the

sharing of information between agencies?

- How effective has the Commissioner been in engaging with rural communities to allay the fear of crime and increase the confidence of residents in protecting themselves from the risk of rural crime?
- What are the key concerns and priorities which need to be considered by the Commissioner to support the development of his new Rural Crime Strategy for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight?

It was heard that the Panel had undertaken a previous scrutiny of rural crime in 2013, which had considered the actions of the then Commissioner in his aim to reduce the gap in solved crime rates between rural and non-rural areas. Through this scrutiny the Panel found that more could be done to help inform and empower local communities to protect themselves, to raise confidence in rural community policing and to improve the partnership approach to rural crime.

The Chairman explained that, in revisiting rural crime, the Panel aimed to scrutinise and support the Commissioner in his intention to keep rural communities across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight safe and secure. This review would consider progress made against some of the key areas discussed in the Panel's previous report on rural crime and look to identify and discuss those of current interest.

The Chairman explained that the oral evidence giving session would take the format of a expert witness panel, with all representatives present being given the opportunity to answer questions from the wider Panel. Discussion was encouraged, and any questions that were not answered on the day would be fed back to witnesses for a written response after the meeting.

The expert witnesses were provided with the opportunity to introduce themselves and to give a brief overview of their organisations role in preventing and tackling rural crime across Hampshire and the IOW.

James Payne, Acting Chief Executive OPCC (Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner), explained that he was attending the scrutiny session on behalf of the Commissioner.

The expert witness panel were then asked a number of questions relating to the written evidence received. Members heard:

### *Keeping rural communities safe*

- It was heard that Hampshire Constabulary ('the Constabulary') were one of only few policing areas to have a dedicated rural crime team. As well as a dedicated officer who provides rural communities with advice on crime prevention and target hardening, PSCO's provide appropriate targeted advice to rural residents and repeat victims are visited to support them in preventing further re-victimisation.
- It was recognised it can take time to build up trust and relationships within rural communities and that changes in policing staff can risk eroding this. The Constabulary explained that to avoid this, they seek to keep PSCO's within the same communities for as long as possible.
- Efforts were being made to try to ensure that all residents know who their local officer is, even if they are not regularly visible, as the traditional 'bobby on the beat' is no longer a reality for modern policing.
- A partnership approach was vital in encouraging residents in rural areas to protect themselves and to widen the influence of such messages.
- The OPCC were looking for new partners, with a shared focus upon reducing rural crime. The OPCC's recent 'Rural Communities Matter' conferences had allowed the OPCC to reach out to a wider network of such partners.
- The Constabulary have also recently developed an innovative new partnership with the National Farmer's Union.

### *Definition*

- The Chief Constable of North Yorkshire Police had recognised some inadequacies in the nationally recognised definition of rural crime, and was undertaking a full review of the rural crime portfolio. It is hoped that this review will deliver enhanced guidance, governance and structure for forces to follow in relation to their focus on rural crime.
- It was suggested that there were perhaps a broader range of communities who consider themselves as rural, such as larger towns which still have rural concerns, and therefore the definition of rural crime may need to be reviewed to ensure that it sufficiently covers all those communities concerned with rural crime.
- Modern concerns were also starting to have an impact on crime within rural communities. The increased use of satellite navigation devices was creating traffic issues in smaller villages, as people are diverted onto smaller

roads not suitable for volume traffic and fly tipping was an emerging issue causing upset to residents. It was further noted that theft from vehicles was a major concern within the New Forest area, with visitors and tourists falling victim.

### *Engagement with rural communities*

- The importance of two way conversation with rural communities was raised, with information not only being cascaded but an opportunity for feedback in return.
- Rural communities are made up of a diverse range of people, from those working on the land to those living in rural communities, but not understanding or living the rural way of life, to those owning a second home in the country. Each resident has a different set of needs and requires a different approach in terms of communication and response to concerns.
- Rural crime was always an important topic at parish council meetings. Parish newsletters and parish and town councils twitter feeds were an effective communication tool within rural communities, which could be accessed by the PCC to share safety and crime prevention messages.
- It was felt that rural communities would welcome greater visibility from the PCC, although the efforts made by and liaison from Country Watch officers was well regarded.
- Cllr Beck had spoken with the Chair of his local Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, and they feedback that they had received very little communication from the OPCC and that requests for the Commissioner to attend three local events had not been accept. Cllr Macdonald also stated that in his role as chair of the EHALC, he had received very little communication from the OPCC in relation to rural crime.

### *'Rural Communities Matter' Conferences*

- The OPCC had chosen to run their recent 'Rural Communities Matter' conferences across five different geographical locations across the Hampshire policing area to make it as accessible to residents as possible. The Commissioner also wrote to all town and parish councils to invite them to attend.
- The OPCC had sought to deliver messages into the heart of rural communities and engage as many people as possible in their rural conferences through visiting

and displaying communications in locations such as local pubs and post offices. Innovative approaches were also used, including targeting appropriate radio channels for those driving agricultural vehicles and using beer mats as a form of promotion.

- 180 people had attended the conferences, which was a 50% increase in attendance compared to the previous conference, which had been held in a single location.
- The focus of the conferences was to hear what people within rural communities want and to hear what matters most to them.
- From these conferences, the OPCC hoped to create a contact list of all those parties interested in preventing rural crime, to enable the OPCC to more widely consult on their plans for a new rural strategy.
- Once published the new strategy will contain an operational delivery plan outlining how the OPCC intend to engage with residents.

#### *Impact of crime within Rural Communities*

- It was recognised that the fear and perception of crime within rural communities was more significant than the actual prevalence of crime, which was considered to be quite low.
- The remoteness of rural communities and greater proportion of more elderly residents were considered to be contributing factors to the heightened fear of crime.
- It was understood, by the Constabulary, that certain types of crime would have a more significant impact within a rural community vs an urban area. An example given was non-dwelling burglaries, which could have a much greater impact on a rural resident. Should agricultural vehicles or equipment be stolen during a non-dwelling burglary, this could affect the whole life of and opportunity to earn income for the victim. As a result it was more likely that an officer would visit the property in such a crime, although it was against the general policy of the Constabulary regarding response to a non-dwelling burglary, as they understood the heightened impact on the victim.
- Whilst this was appreciated, the HALC reps expressed that the perception of rural residents was that the police weren't focussed upon pursuing the offender, but instead upon giving advice on preventing further re-victimisation. It was felt investigating officers needed to offer more empathy in such situations as there was concerns that there was an under-reporting of crime due to perceived in-action by the police.

Bob Purkiss left the meeting at this point.

### *101 Service*

- Mixed feedback had been received regarding the responsiveness and effectiveness of the 101 service in relation to rural crime.
- It was heard that whilst quantitative measurements were in place and regularly reviewed, such as answering 75% of calls within 60 seconds, further measures were needed in order to measure the qualitative outcomes.
- Inspector Hubble explained that over 1 million calls were received by the service each year and that feedback was welcomed to help improve the service. The time and date of each call and the number called from was trackable and would allow the Constabulary to identify whether concerns related to an individual member of staff, or whether a fundamental change was needed to the service as a whole.
- It was also explained that, as well as the 101 phone service, reports could be made online or by email, and call-backs could also be requested. A new Self-evident app is in use which allows residents to report incidents without using 101. A customer management system is being introduced later this year which will enable residents to create a personal profile to submit reports and keep up to date with the status of their reported crimes”.

The OPCC felt the timing of the Panel’s scrutiny was helpful, and it was hoped that the findings of this scrutiny would help to identify where any specific weaknesses might exist, and highlight where opportunities may be identified.

The Chairman thanked the witnesses for providing key evidence to the proactive scrutiny of Rural Crime.

The Chairman explained that recommendations would be drafted based on the Panel’s consideration of the written and oral evidence received, and this would be sent to the Commissioner for comment in due course.

## **79. PROACTIVE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

Members considered a paper from the Plan working group, outlining the proposed scrutiny programme for 2017/18. Councillor Steve Clarke, a member of the Plan working group, spoke to the paper and explained that the working group had proposed topics which focussed upon some of the key risk



areas identified within the Police and Crime Plan, as well as those of current local and national interest.

RESOLVED:

That the proactive scrutiny work programme for 2017/18 is agreed.

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Chairman, 7 July 2017