

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Cheshire Police and Crime Panel held on Friday 3rd February 2023, in the Council Chamber, Wyvern House, Winsford

PRESENT

Councillors:

Cheshire East: Councillors J Paul Findlow, Laura Jeuda and Mick Warren

Cheshire West & Chester: Councillors Rob Bissett, Keith Millar and Lynn Riley

Halton Councillors Martha Lloyd Jones and Norman Plumpton Walsh

Warrington: Councillors Mo Hussain and Wendy Maisey OBE

Independent Co-optees: Mr Evan Morris MBE, Mrs Gemma Shepherd - Etchells and Miss Yasmin Somani

Officers: Mr Brian Reed, Cheshire East Council
Mr Martin Smith, Cheshire East Council

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Jane Whalen (Warrington) who was represented by Cllr Mo Hussain.

2. CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATION OF INTERESTS. RELEVANT AUTHORITIES (DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS) REGULATIONS 2012

No issues were raised.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public wished to speak at the meeting.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd December 2022 be approved. Two small typographical errors were noted. These would be corrected in the published minutes.

5. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair welcomed Cllr Mo Hussain (Warrington Council) to the meeting.

The Chair thanked the Commissioner for hosting the finance briefing for Panel members held at Police HQ the previous week.

6. REVIEW OF COMPLAINTS

The Panel noted that during 2022 two complaints about the Police and Crime Commissioner had been received. In line with the Panel's procedure, the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Complaints Management Sub Committee reviewed each complaint, taking advice as appropriate. In each case they had determined that there was no legitimate complaint against the Commissioner and the complaints were therefore rejected. Relevant timescales were met in both cases.

7. PANEL'S WORK PROGRAMME

It was noted that the March 2023 meeting of the Panel would receive a draft programme of meetings for the 2023/24 Municipal year for its consideration.

There was general agreement that to accommodate cost effective and efficient webcasting of meetings, the Panel would default to holding its meetings at Ellesmere Port Library; with other locations across the county being used as necessary. There was recognition that the Panel needed to be mindful of its carbon footprint when arranging meetings.

8. QUESTIONS SUBMITTED IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING TO THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

The Chair explained that three questions had been formally submitted to the Commissioner in advance of the meeting and that these had been included in the published papers.

9. WELCOME TO THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER / INTRODUCTION BY THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

The Chair welcomed the Commissioner to the meeting.

The Commissioner outlined the progress that the Constabulary were making with the recruitment of new Police Officers, noting that a further intake was scheduled for March 2023. He outlined the success of his Community Cashback Fund which used money seized under the Proceeds of Crime Act. Each of Cheshire's nine Local Policing Units had been allocated £10,000 from the Fund.

The Commissioner briefed the Panel on the work that the Constabulary were undertaking with the Hollie Gazzard Trust, which was aimed at making Cheshire's streets even safer.

10. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S PROPOSED PRECEPT FOR 2023/24

The Commissioner outlined his proposed Precept for 2023/24, taking questions from Panel members on the details of his proposals. There was a general recognition that an increase in Council Tax bills for the coming year would pose challenges for many families across the county.

Cllr Martha Lloyd Jones (seconded by Cllr Norman Plumpton Walsh) proposed that the Panel veto the Commissioner's proposal to increase the Policing element of the Council Tax by 6.37 per cent. When put to the vote, 6 Panel members supported the proposition, 5 were against and 2 members abstained. As a two thirds majority of all Panel members was necessary for such a proposition to be carried, the proposition was lost.

Further discussion took place on the details of the Commissioner's proposed Precept.

RESOLVED

That the proposed Precept be supported, with recommendations being made to the Commissioner.

The Chair's letter, detailing the Panel's recommendations to the Commissioner, is attached to these minutes. The Commissioner's response is also attached.

11. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

Panel members asked the Commissioner a range of questions. Details of questions and the Commissioner's responses can be found on the Police and Crime Panel page of the Cheshire East Council website.