

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Cheshire Police and Crime Panel
held at 10.00am on Friday 4th October 2024 in the Council Chamber,
Macclesfield Town Hall

PRESENT

Councillors:

Cheshire East: Councillors Steve Edgar, Rob Morton and Judy Snowball

Cheshire West & Chester: Councillors Mike Jones and Keith Millar

Halton Councillors Martha Lloyd Jones and Peter Lloyd Jones

Warrington: Councillors Kuldeep Dhillon and Bob Hignett

Independent Co-optees: Mrs Gemma Shepherd – Etchells and Miss Yasmin Somani

Officers: Ms Janet Witkowski (Cheshire East Council Interim Monitoring Officer), Mr Brian Reed, Mr Martin Smith and Ms Francis Handley (Secretariat)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Sam Naylor (Cheshire West and Chester) and Norman Plumpton Walsh (Halton).

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

No issues were raised.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED

That Councillor Judy Snowball be elected as Chair of the Police and Crime Panel.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mrs Lynn Riley, a former Panel member, addressed the Panel paying tribute to Mr Evan Morris MBE, who had resigned from the Panel in August. She urged the Panel to reconsider the decision not to allow Mr Morris to take back his resignation.

In response to Mrs Riley's comments, Ms Janet Witkowski, Cheshire East Council's interim Monitoring Officer and the Panel's legal advisor, explained that she had provided the Panel with privileged legal advice in relation the resignation of Mr Morris from his position as an independent co-opted Panel member. She was limited by what she could say in a public forum but confirmed that the resignation had been properly submitted and once submitted had taken immediate effect.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meetings held on 19th July 2024 be approved.

6. APPOINTMENT TO VACANT POSITION OF INDEPENDENT CO-OPTED MEMBER OF THE PANEL

Mr Brian Reed outlined the process that would need to be followed to fill the vacant position of independent co-opted Panel member following the resignation in August of Mr Evan Morris MBE.

A number of Panel members suggested that a learning point from the resignation of Mr Morris was that the Panel's Procedure Rules should be amended to provide greater clarity on how the resignation of independent co-opted Panel members should be managed in future.

RESOLVED:

That a five member Recruitment Panel be created to take forward the recruitment of an independent co-opted Panel member, with the Recruitment Panel making a recommendation to a future Panel meeting as to who should be appointed. The Secretariat were empowered to consult with Panel members to agree the membership of the Recruitment Panel.

7. PANEL'S WORK PROGRAMME

The programme of formal meetings for the coming municipal year was noted. Panel members were asked to let the Secretariat know of any issues that they would wish to discuss at either formal meetings of the Panel or at informal

meetings held with the Commissioner. The Secretariat were asked to liaise with the Commissioner's Office to set up a series of informal meetings.

8. QUESTIONS SUBMITTED IN ADVANCE TO THE COMMISSIONER

The Panel noted that four written questions had been submitted to the Commissioner in advance of the meeting.

9. WELCOME TO THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER / COMMISSIONER'S INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

The Chair welcomed the Commissioner to the meeting.

The Commissioner congratulated Cllr Judy Snowball on her appointment as the Panel's Chair, he also paid tribute to the contribution that Mr Evan Morris MBE had made as both a Panel member and Chair.

The Commissioner noted that he had been privileged to attend the National Police Memorial Day in Glasgow and paid tribute to the sacrifice of those who had died in the line of duty. He updated the Panel on a range of issues, including his scrutiny of the Chief Constable, a ministerial visit from Lord Hanson (Minister of State at the Home Office), and an update on the use he would be making of citizen assemblies, an issue that he had briefed the Panel on at the previous meeting.

10. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

In addition to the four pre-submitted questions, Panel members asked the Commissioner a range of further questions. Details of all questions asked of the Commissioner and his responses can be found on the Police and Crime Panel page of the Cheshire East Council website.