

Cheshire Police and Crime Panel

Date of Meeting: 18 November 2016

**Report of: Brian Reed, Head of Governance and Democratic Services,
Cheshire East Council**

Subject/Title: Location of Police and Crime Panel Meetings

1. Report Summary

1.1 This report follows a discussion at the meeting of the Cheshire Police and Crime Panel on held 23 September 2016 where members considered options for the location of future meetings.

1.2 The relevant section from the draft Minute of the previous meeting is:

“That a further report be submitted to the next meeting of the Panel exploring options for the use of a portable webcasting solution for future meetings, to enable consideration of rotating the venues for the Panel meetings around the four Cheshire Authority areas, including the potential cost and other implications associated with this.”

1.3 This report specifically addresses options for the webcasting of meetings.

2. Recommendation

2.1 The Panel are asked to determine whether they wish future meetings be held at Wyvern House in Winsford, or move to other location(s) around the county.

3. Background information

3.1 Since its inception the Cheshire Police and Crime Panel has held its meetings at Wyvern House in Winsford. Meetings have been live webcast, at a cost of around £1,100 a year, utilising Cheshire West and Chester's existing webcasting contract and the equipment permanently installed in the Council Chamber at Wyvern House.

3.2 Webcasting of meetings has enabled anyone with access to a computer, tablet or smart phone to view meetings either live or by accessing the archive, it has

made the Panel more accessible, accountable and transparent than would otherwise be the case.

- 3.3 At the first meeting of the newly established Panel in June 2016, Members asked that other options for meeting venues be reviewed, with consideration being given to rotating the location of meetings around the county. The meeting held in September received a detailed report providing a range of options for the location of future meetings. For reference this report is appended as Appendix I.
- 3.4 Live webcasting of meetings at a reasonable cost is in effect only available if meetings are held at Wyvern House or in Cheshire West and Chester accommodation at HQ in Chester. However, as indicated above members of the Panel asked that further work be undertaken to review other options.
- 3.5 Cheshire West and Chester Council have a mobile webcasting unit, which can be used to record and then webcast meetings. By way of example they provide this service on a regular basis to Frodsham Town Council. When operating in this way meetings become viewable approximately 48 hours after the meeting has finished. Other functionality is the same as a meeting which is webcast live. No other Cheshire Council has the equipment or staff to provide such a service.
- 3.6 In principle, and subject to sufficient advance notice, Cheshire West and Chester Council would be prepared to record and then webcast meetings of the Police and Crime Panel from locations other than Wyvern House. However, operating from a remote location is significantly more time consuming as equipment has to be transported and set up, in addition it is necessary for a site survey to be undertaken in advance of the first webcast from a new location.
- 3.7 Members of the Panel are asked to consider what may be lost, if anything, if meetings were no longer live webcast and access was only available via the archive facility.
- 3.8 In summary there are a number of options available to the Panel:
 - Continue to meet at Wyvern House, with meetings being live webcast.
 - Rotate meetings around Cheshire, with meetings being recorded and then made available via a webcast within a couple of days. Should occasional meetings continue to be held at Wyvern House live webcasting would continue to be an option from that venue.
 - Rotate meetings around Cheshire with no recording or webcast.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 Cheshire West and Chester Council provide a very efficient and cost effective webcasting service. As indicated in paragraph 3.1 above, the cost of webcasting meetings in Wyvern House is £1,100 a year. It is estimated that this

cost would double if a mobile solution was adopted and all meetings webcast in this way.

- 4.2 The budget as it stands could accommodate the current cost of webcasting for meetings held in Winsford. Should the Panel decide that it wishes to hold meetings in other venues, and that meetings should continue to be webcast, the four constituent authorities may be approached to make a contribution to cover the increased expenditure.

5. Equality Implications

- 5.1 There are no equality implications.

6. Contact Information

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