

Minutes of a Meeting of the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Panel held in the Hub, Mareham Road, Horncastle, Lincolnshire LN9 6PH on Friday, 3rd February, 2023 at 11.00 am.

PRESENT

Chris Cook (Independent Co-optee) (Chairman)

Councillors Patricia Bradwell (Lincolnshire County Council), Chris Burke (City of Lincoln Council), Richard Butroid (Lincolnshire County Council), Philip Dilks (Lincolnshire County Council), Graham Marsh (East Lindsey District Council), Nigel Pepper (South Holland District Council), Paul Skinner (Boston Borough Council), Susan Waring (North Kesteven District Council) and Anne Welburn (West Lindsey District Council).

Independent Co-opted Members: George Krawiec.

GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE:

Chris Haward	Chief Constable of Lincolnshire Police
Marc Jones	Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire
Julie Flint	Chief Finance Officer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire
Joanne Davidson	Partnership and Delivery Manager, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

John Medler	- Assistant Director Governance & Monitoring Officer
Ann Good	- Democratic Services Manager
Rebecca Cooke	- Transformation Officer/Police and Crime Panel Officer

35. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting including the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire and representatives from his Office. He also welcomed the Chief Constable for Lincolnshire, Chris Haward.

36. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sarah Trotter, and Malcolm Burch (Chief Executive, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire).

37. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (IF ANY):

At this point in the meeting, Members were invited to disclose any relevant interests, no such interests were disclosed.

38. MINUTES:

The Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th November 2022 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

The Open and Exempt Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 12th December 2022 were tabled at the Meeting and signed as a correct record with an amendment that Councillor Richard Butroid had submitted an apology.

39. ACTIONS:

The Actions of the meeting held on 18th November 2022 were confirmed.

In respect of Action 24, clear up rates on burglary it was confirmed that information was expected in due course and would be shared with the Panel.

40. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIRMAN:

The Chairman informed that there were no communications.

41. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC:

There were no questions from members of the public.

42. DELIVERY OF THE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN:

A report was presented to introduce the Police and Crime Commissioner's report on the Delivery of the Police and Crime Plan 2021 - 2025. The report covering the period to January 2023 was attached as Appendix A.

During discussion reference was made to the serious violence duty and the role of local authorities and the Police and Crime Commissioner in this, police behaviour and conduct, and the announcement regarding the reduction in PCSO numbers for Lincolnshire.

Questions were invited from Panel Members. A copy of which is attached at Appendix A to these Minutes.

Following which, it was

RESOLVED

That the update report on Delivery of the Police and Crime Plan be noted.

43. PROPOSED POLICING PRECEPT 2023/2024:

A report was presented to enable the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Panel, to review and make recommendations regarding the Police and Crime Commissioner's proposed Police Precept for 2023/24. The Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire (the Commissioner) had proposed an increase in the Police Precept of £14.94 for Band D properties for 2023/24. Details of the proposal were attached to the report at Appendix A and Annexes A, B and C.

It was noted that under Schedule 5 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Panel (the Panel) must review the Commissioner's proposed Police Precept and report on it. The guidelines for this process were detailed within Appendix 2 to the report.

During discussion reference was made to the recent budget briefing held for Panel Members to ensure that ahead of the meeting they had all the information available to them.

The Commissioner then invited Julie Flint, the Chief Finance Officer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, to deliver her presentation. Julie displayed slides which, she informed Members, would underpin the Commissioner's Precept Proposal.

The slides were divided under five main headings:

- Police Grant Settlement
- Expenditure Plans & Funding
- Future Funding Landscape
- Risk Management
- Impact on Precept

Unusually, at this point in the cycle, the police grant settlement had now been confirmed. This figure had not changed from the provisional settlement, and Lincolnshire had maintained its share of the overall funding that is available for policing – that was a 0.83% share of the £8.6bn that was available nationally, equating to £71.6 million for Lincolnshire. This represented an increase of £200,000 in the police grant from last year.

In addition to the police grant, the Panel was advised of a ringfenced allocation of £2.3 million which was dependent upon maintaining officer numbers. At the provisional settlement there was no clarity about how that might work, since then there had been more information but not total clarity. It appeared the government was going to count officer numbers in September and then the following March, and then half of the grant would be payable if numbers were sufficient to meet the target, which for Lincolnshire was 1,186 officers.

The pension top-up grant had been maintained as £1.2 million, and the settlement confirmed that precept flexibility of up to £15 per annum increase for a Band D property.

On expenditure plans and funding the Panel was shown a graph that outlined the provisional expenditure plans for Lincolnshire, which showed that the majority of the spend (46%) went on police officers, and the next biggest item (26.7%) was for police staff & PCSOs, then other costs including custody, fleet, premises, and regional collaboration at 23.2%, capital financing at 3.4% and the office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (0.9%). The overall spending shown was £162 million currently planned.

Expenditure increases in 2023/24 were shown to include:

- Investment to support critical services, £2.0m
- Police Officer – increase in average salary and pay awards, £1.9m
- Police Staff – impact of unbudgeted 2022/23 pay award, £0.2m
- Increased ICT investment and inflation on existing ICT services, £0.9m
- Utilities, £0.3m, and Fuel, £0.1m increases
- Equipment replacement & additions for new starters £0.7m
- External Training Courses, £0.47m

Under funding, the Panel was shown the provisional funding based on the £14.94 precept. A graph shown to the Panel detailed how 54% of funding was received via government grants, 45% through council tax and 0.29% was contribution from reserves and other income.

The Panel was advised of two ways to ensure that more money was received for Lincolnshire in the future in terms of the government grant, either the pot or the share could increase. In terms of public spending over the medium term, the prospects were not too favourable. The most recent numbers coming out of the Autumn statement from the Office for Budget Responsibility showed that over the medium term, in terms of government spending, the government was planning a 0.7% reduction in services, as opposed to a 3.5% increase that was proposed previously. It was explained that the share of the grant that Lincolnshire received had not been updated since 2014, and therefore did not reflect the increased demand or increased population, etc.

On risk and mitigation, it was explained that the numbers provided to the Panel were still provisional due to the timing of the meeting.

A surplus on the collection fund overall, and the Council Tax base, showed a 1% overall rise, which was the assumption in the grant settlement. To address risks, the Panel was advised that the focus was being kept on productivity, efficiency, and investment.

It was noted that the Commissioner was on the National Steering Group for the grant distribution view and continued to work with the government to influence.

Special grant applications were made at least once per year in support of extra funding for Lincolnshire.

The headlines from the public consultation on council tax showed overwhelming support for increased funding for Lincolnshire. 3,843 responses were received in total, with 77% of respondents believing that funding for Lincolnshire Police should be increased, and 65% of respondents were prepared to pay at least 5% more.

On the impact on the precept, the Panel was shown in monetary terms the impact for all council tax bands. It was shown that the precept increase of £14.94 to a Band D property equated to 29p per week and an additional £3.6m income.

The Commissioner invited Questions from Panel Members. A copy of the questions and responses are attached at Appendix A to these minutes.

RESOLVED

1. That the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire's proposal to increase the Policing Precept by £14.94 for 2023/24 be approved;
2. That the Panel Chairman and the Democratic Services Manager be requested to arrange for the formal acceptance letter to be sent to the Commissioner.

The Panel noted with extreme concern the proposal to cut the number of PCSOs and would ask the PCC to further consider this with the Chief Constable to ensure that the Community confidence in police presence in Lincolnshire is not seriously damaged.

44. COMPLAINTS POSITION STATEMENT:

A report was presented that provided details of the procedures in place for dealing with complaints made against the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire and an update on the number of complaints received during the period 1 November 2022 to 9 January 2023. The Complaints Position Statement was attached as Appendix A.

It was noted that none (zero) complaints were made against the Police and Crime Commissioner during the period Tuesday 1 November 2022 to Monday 9 January 2023.

RESOLVED

That the Complaints Position Statement be noted.

45. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANELS:

The Panel's liaison to the National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels (NAPFCP), Councillor Susan Waring advised that the Panels were continuing to meet regularly with the aim of improving the visibility and recognition of the association nationally.

46. PANEL MEETING SCHEDULE AND WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24:

A report was presented that detailed the Work Programme 2023/24 and proposed meeting dates for the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Panel for 2023/24. The report also included details of the Panel's training and development programme.

RESOLVED

That the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Panel schedule of meetings for 2023/24 be approved.

47. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

The programmed date for the next Meeting of the Panel was noted as 11am on Friday 9 June 2023.

The Meeting closed at 12.58 pm.