



SOUTH YORKSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

5 FEBRUARY 2024

PRESENT: Councillor N Wright (Barnsley MBC) (Chair)

Councillor B Miskell (Sheffield City Council) (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: R Davison (Sheffield City Council), R Haleem (Rotherham MBC), S Hunt (Barnsley MBC), K Osborne (Substitute Member for Barnsley MBC), H Nottage (Sheffield City Council), W Carratt (Independent Co-opted Member of the Police and Crime Panel), J Griffin (Independent Co-opted Member of the Police and Crime Panel) and R Hindley (Independent Co-opted Member of the Police and Crime Panel)

In attendance remotely: Dr A Billings (South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner)

S Abbott, M Buttery, S Parkin and F Topliss
(Office of the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner)

S Ghuman and A Shirt
(Barnsley MBC)

Apologies for absence were received from
Councillor J Church (City of Doncaster Council), Councillor T Baum-Dixon (Rotherham MBC), Councillor E Muddiman-Rawlins (City of Doncaster Council) and Councillor S Saeed (Sheffield City Council)

1. **WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were noted as above.

3. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

4. **URGENT ITEMS**

None.

5. **ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

None.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS IN RELATION TO ANY ITEM OF BUSINESS ON THE AGENDA

None.

7. PUBLIC QUESTIONS:-

A) TO THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

There were no questions to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

B) TO THE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

There were no questions to the Police and Crime Panel.

8. MINUTES OF THE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL MEETING HELD ON 11 DECEMBER 2023

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Police and Crime Panel meeting held on 11 December 2023 be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

9. CHANGE OF POLICE AND CRIME PANEL MEMBERSHIP

A report of the Panel's Support Officer was presented to highlight that the City of Doncaster Council have appointed Councillor James Church to replace Councillor Cynthia Ransome as its representative on the Panel with effect from 18 December 2023, due to Councillors in Sheffield changing political party, which has impacted on political proportionality across South Yorkshire.

RESOLVED – That Members of the Police and Crime Panel:-

- i) Noted that Councillor Ransome's membership of the Panel ceased on 18 December 2023.
- ii) Noted the appointment of Councillor Church to the Panel by the City of Doncaster Council with effect from 18 December 2023.
- iii) Agreed to appoint Councillor Church to the Panel's Budget Working Group.

10. PROPOSED COUNCIL TAX PRECEPT AND REVENUE BUDGET FOR 2024/25

A report of the Chief Finance Officer, OPCC was submitted to notify the Panel of the PCC's proposal for the policing element of the Council Tax precept for 2024/25.

Dr Billings provided the Panel with an introduction to the report and explained that when he was first elected in 2014, the Force were not in a good place. From 2016, the Force had been transformed and had improved its performance. The latest HMICFRS inspection of the Force reported that of nine areas of delivery, the Force were 'Outstanding' in three of these areas, 'Good' in five and 'Adequate' in one.

The Panel were informed that the proposed budget and precept would allow the Force to maintain its share of the police officer numbers recruited through the national 20,000 officer uplift programme.

South Yorkshire continued to have legacy costs, some of which would need to be funded locally. Dr Billings expressed his disappointment, that on 30 January 2024 he had received a letter from the Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire, confirming that the departmental Home Office Special Grant allocation had been reduced from 2024/25. The additional reductions amounted to £6.6m throughout the Medium Term Resource Strategy (MTRS) period. Further information on the changes to the Special Grant allocation had been circulated to the Panel via an additional information report.

Although the 2024/25 budget was in balance, over the MTRS period, even with the maximum precept increase, there would need to be a continuing need for annual savings of around £17m, which would arise further towards the end of the MTRS period. Some use of reserves would be required to balance the budget. The Force had commenced its priority based budgeting process to identify and implement the savings required.

In conclusion, Dr Billings said that it was very difficult this year, not to set the precept at the maximum amount that the government is allowing, which was £13 on a Band D property. He was very aware of the financial impact this would have on the residents of South Yorkshire and their ability to pay, due to a large number of residents struggling financially. A public consultation exercise had been carried out with the public of South Yorkshire in relation to raising the Council Tax precept for 2024/25. Overwhelmingly, the results showed that 44% of respondents (1,727) said that they would be willing to pay up to £15 more per year. Further details were provided in Appendix C to the report.

S Abbott referred the Panel to the proposal in the report at paragraph 2 (a). The PCC recommended that the Panel support a proposed annual increase in the policing element of Council Tax (the precept) for 2024/25 of £13 for a Band D property, which was an increase of 5.46%. In South Yorkshire 74% of properties are in Bands A or B (57% and 17% respectively). 33% of Band A households, and 16% of Band B households claim a reduction in council tax through council tax reduction schemes.

The following key points were highlighted:

- The Home Office funding settlement continued to be for one year only, which did cause some difficulty in terms of longer-term financial planning.
- The 2024/25 Home Office provisional settlement had increased funding for policing by £843m when compared with the 2023/24 settlement.
- The core grant for South Yorkshire amounted to £261.5m, with the expectation being that a further £93.6m would be raised through council tax. The total funding available was a 6.0% average increase nationally, with South Yorkshire being allocated an increase of 6.1% based on the funding formula.
- The settlement gave PCCs the flexibility to increase the policing element of the precept locally by £13 on a Band D property for 2024/25. All government calculations had assumed that this increase would be levied in order to

maintain police officer numbers through the police officer uplift programme. South Yorkshire's police officer uplift target was 3,049, which must be maintained.

- £515m of funding had been granted to support forces with the costs of the police officer pay award. South Yorkshire had been allocated an additional £4.7m in 2024/25.
- The Home Office Special Grant allocation had been reduced by £16m overall.
- The proposed budget amounted to £344m, however this would change in light of changes announced by the Home Office in relation to the Special Grant allocation.

The Panel noted that the increase in Council Tax precept of £13.00 on a Band D property, was levied to support:

- The development of the operating model, with specific investment in the areas of economic crime, digital crime, vulnerability and neighbourhood crime.
- Investment in IT infrastructure and core IT systems.
- Developing the technology enabled team, procurement and vetting teams.
- The continuance of the savings programme.

The report set out a number of key risks and uncertainties, which were noted by Members.

R Hindley asked if the level of reserves would fall below the prudential level for 2024/25.

In response, S Abbott explained that the prudential reserves level was not forecast to fall below 5% until 2028/29. The reserves position would need to be recast following the reduction of the Home Office Special Grant funding.

Councillor Nottage asked if the OPCC was aware of any external situation which would enable the Force to build up their reserves in the medium term.

S Abbott replied that she could not foresee any additional government grants being announced unless economic circumstances changed.

Councillor Nottage asked if any capital funding was set aside in the event of an unexpected capital repair being required.

S Abbott replied that she was not aware of any unexpected capital repair works which were likely to come forward in the medium term. There was currently no capital reserve set aside. It was noted that the Reserves Strategy would be reviewed prior to the PCC's final approval of the budget at the end of February.

J Griffin asked if there had been any specific reason or modelling provided by the Home Office in relation to the announced reduction in Special Grant funding.

M Buttery replied that a meeting would be held on 9 February 2024 with Home Office officials to understand the background for the reduction in Special Grant funding and if this position could change in the future.

Councillor Hunt asked if there was an end date when all legacy costs would be finalised.

S Abbott replied that, based on current legal advice, it was anticipated that legacy costs may be concluded by 2028/29, but this was very much dependent on the progress made on all of the cases.

Councillor Wright referred the Panel to the recommendations in the report at paragraphs 2a and 2b. A recorded vote was taken and recorded as follows:-

For accepting the proposed increase in the policing element of the Council Tax precept for 2024/25 (10) Councillors Wright, Miskell, Hunt, Osborne, Haleem, Davison, Nottage, Mr Carratt, Miss Griffin and Mr Hindley.

Against the proposal (0). Abstained (0).

The proposal was approved.

RESOLVED – That Members of the Police and Crime Panel:-

- i) Voted unanimously to accept the proposed annual increase in the policing element of the Council Tax (the precept) for 2024/25 of £13 for a Band D property, which would be an increase of 5.46%.
- ii) Noted that most properties in South Yorkshire are in Bands A (57%) and B (17%) and C (12%) where the increase would be A 17p per week B 19p per week, and C 22p per week.

11. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE (INCLUDING DECISIONS MADE SINCE THE LAST MEETING)

M Buttery presented the PCC's Update report to the Panel. The report provided Members with an update on key PCC activities and decisions, and key OPCC activities against the OPCC's Delivery Plan.

The Executive Summary of the report provided Members with an overview of highlights of activity undertaken since the last Panel meeting held on 11 December 2023.

W Carratt asked if further information could be provided on the review of current data sharing arrangements in the Criminal Justice System.

In response, M Buttery explained that local Guidance on data sharing for criminal justice partners, alongside a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) had now been developed. It was agreed that Panel Members would be provided with a copy of the Guidance on data sharing and MoU.

W Carratt noted that the PCC had responded to a further consultation on the Mandatory Reporting of Child Sexual Abuse. He asked if further details could be provided on the PCC's response.

M Buttery replied that she would review the PCC's consultation response to ascertain if it would be appropriate to share with Panel Members.

RESOLVED – That Members of the Police and Crime Panel:-

- i) Noted the contents of the report.
- ii) Asked questions on the matters contained within the report, given that it explains how the PCC has over this period delivered his Police and Crime Plan and discharged the wide range of his legal responsibilities, and the decisions he has taken which are of public interest.
- iii) Noted that Panel Members would be provided with a copy of the Guidance on data sharing and Memorandum of Understanding for criminal justice partners.
- iv) Noted that M Buttery had agreed to review the PCC's consultation response on the Mandatory Reporting of Child Sexual Abuse and ascertain if it would be appropriate to share with Panel Members.

12. UPDATE ON THE TRANSFER OF PCC FUNCTIONS TO THE SOUTH YORKSHIRE MAYOR

M Buttery provided Members with a verbal update on the latest position regarding the transfer of PCC functions to the South Yorkshire Mayor.

The following key points were noted:-

- The required Statutory Instrument (Transfer Order) had been delayed due to the government launching a public consultation exercise in South Yorkshire and West Midlands on 20 December 2023 regarding the transfer of PCC functions to the Mayor. The closing date for comments was 31 January 2024.
- Following the launch of the public consultation exercise, all work on South Yorkshire's Transition Programme had been paused.
- A meeting of the Programme Board had been held on 15 January 2024 where each of the workstream leads had been asked to assess the impact of the delay caused by the public consultation on each of the workstreams.
- One workstream (Force IT system) which was scheduled to be implemented, had now been paused, which had incurred financial costs.
- Discussions had also taken place regarding the year end accounts and the financial year end moving to the end of May. If the transfer did not go ahead, then the financial year end would go back to 31 March.
- The TUPE staff transfer timetable was also discussed and Programme Board leads had raised that the timetable was very tight and there were risks associated.
- If the Transfer Order was not laid before Parliament by Wednesday 7 February 2024, it was unlikely that it would be laid before the Parliamentary Recess commenced from 8 February 2024.
- If the PCC transfer did not go ahead, then the PCC election for May 2024 would not be cancelled. The Mayoral election that was due for 2026 would not be brought forward to 2024.

W Carratt wished to place on record that it was not acceptable to leave officers and the public with three days' worth of notice about whether or not a major democratic structural reform would go ahead. He felt that it would be incumbent on Members to ask questions at the next Panel meeting if a planned election could not take place.

RESOLVED - That Members of the Police and Crime Panel noted the verbal update.

13. COMPLAINTS UPDATE (JULY TO DECEMBER 2023)

A report of the Panel's Legal Advisor and Panel's Support Officer was submitted to notify the Panel that, between 1 July 2023 to 31 December 2023 there had been one formal complaint received against the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner, where the complainant had made an allegation about the Commissioner's conduct.

Following a thorough review by the Panel's Legal Adviser and Panel's Support Officer, the complaint was closed, without any further action being taken, other than a letter of explanation to the complainant stating that there was no evidence provided by them to support the allegation.

RESOLVED - That Members of the Police and Crime Panel noted the update.

14. POLICE AND CRIME PANEL MEETING DATES 2024/25

A report was submitted to set out a schedule of suggested meeting dates for the Police and Crime Panel in 2024/5.

RESOLVED - That Members of the Police and Crime Panel:-

i) Considered and approved the 2024/25 meeting dates set out below:-

Monday 29 April 2024 – (Already Set)
Monday 10 June 2024 – Annual Meeting
Monday 15 July 2024
Monday 23 September 2024
Monday 9 December 2024
Monday 3 February 2025
Monday 28 April 2025

All Meetings will take place at 1:00 pm with a pre-meeting for Members at 12:30 pm and be held in Barnsley Town Hall, unless stated otherwise.

ii) Agreed to hold additional / public Confirmation Hearings / extraordinary meetings / training events as and when appropriate / necessary.

15. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

A report was submitted to update Members on current events – national, regional and local, together with future plans in respect of learning and development for the Panel.

Suggestions for any other learning and development opportunities Members may have to support the Panel's learning and development were welcomed.

A summary of events which had taken place since the last meeting together with details of proposed future events were set out within the report for Members' information.

RESOLVED – That Members of the Police and Crime Panel:-

- i) Noted the update.
- ii) Agreed to provide suggestions for future learning and development.

16. WORK PROGRAMME / PAB DATES

Members considered the 2024/25 Work Programme and were reminded that they could nominate topics for the Work Programme that fall within the Panel's Statutory role in supporting and scrutinising the Commissioner.

All issues would be given full consideration by the Chair, Vice-Chair and Commissioner at the pre-agenda planning meetings.

Additionally, Members were encouraged to attend the meetings of the Commissioner's Public Accountability Board (PAB) to increase their operational knowledge.

S Abbott informed Members that the Consolidated Financial Outturn Report 2023/24 scheduled to be presented at the Panel meeting on 10 June 2024, may need to be re-scheduled to a future meeting. It was noted that the Panel's Support Officer would be informed of any changes to the timing of the report.

RESOLVED – That Members of the Police and Crime Panel noted the contents of the 2024/25 Work Programme.

17. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING - MONDAY 29 APRIL 2024 1:00 PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, CHURCH STREET, BARNESLEY, S70 2TA

RESOLVED – That the next meeting of the Police and Crime Panel be held on Monday 29 April 2024, at 1:00 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Church Street, Barnsley.

CHAIR