

Police & Crime Panel Report for Overview & Scrutiny – 19th August 2019

Summary

At the latest Police & Crime Panel, the Commissioner presented his annual report. He identified certain highlights, and then took questions and comments from the panel. The deputy CEO presented the quarterly highlights report and CEO's report. Detail of the exchanges regarding these documents are given below. The Panel also elected a new Chair, Cllr Colin Hay, who represents the Cheltenham division of All Saints & Oakley.

Election of Chairperson: Cllr Colin Hay elected as Chairperson

Annual item: Police & Crime Commissioner Annual Report

The substantive part of this meeting was taken up by assessing a near-final draft of the commissioner's annual review.

Commissioner's Highlights

The Commissioner drew attention to specific items within the report: the budget breakdown, included in reasonable detail so as to explain the increased precept; the impact of missing persons on policing; the new training centre soon to open in Berkeley; the work done this year so far on making Gloucestershire child-friendly; and the report that less than 1% of crimes in the county are related to knives, which he attributes partially to a summit held two years ago to address knife crime and drivers for it.

Panel contributions

Members of the panel offered a range of views on the report, including: support for the Keep Safe scheme, which now has 14,000 card holders and 1,200 businesses signed up to it; congratulating the commissioner on the work on child-friendly Gloucestershire; concern about under-resourcing for PCSOs; request for more mental health training for officers.

Requested changes

It was noted that the reports claim that a clear majority of people are in favour of the PCC acquiring governance of Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue Service was challenged, and this section of the report may be repositioned before publication. The commissioner and his team were also asked to include information on wildlife reporting. It was noted that the report did not recognise that the county council and districts within have declared climate emergencies, and requested that the final version contains information showing what the constabulary will do to help achieve carbon neutrality. It was also requested that the Panel be involved earlier in the drafting process of this report in future.

Standard item: Police & Crime Priorities – Quarterly Highlight Report

Delivered in tandem with the Police & Crime Delivery Plans, the highlight report was presented by the deputy CEO. Of note, the constabulary has very recently introduced a new system for steering 999 and 101 phone calls called FINESSE, which enables callers to be routed to the correct part of the constabulary rather than all calls going straight through to

the main 999 and 101 handlers. This should improve a range of call targets and the Panel will be presented with performance data once the system has had time to bed in.

Standard item: Chief Executive's Report

The constabulary has purchased property in Berkeley, Stroud, which is being converted into a training centre. The new facility is in a pleasant location, has excellent facilities, and includes areas for fitness, taser and interview training, conference rooms, a lecture theatre, a mixture of office and breakout space and ample parking.

The commissioner is aware that the ambulance service are in the process of finding a site for an ambulance hub. There is potential for colocation, and many financial and operational benefits of doing so.

For future discussion

The Panel now expects the commissioner's office to submit a new draft of the annual report for scrutiny.

In the last week, following their Crime Data Integrity Inspection, Gloucestershire Constabulary has been rated inadequate. This will be included on the agenda for the next meeting, scheduled for 13th September 2019.