

CUMBRIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cumbria Police and Crime Panel held on Thursday, 26 January 2023 at 10.30 am at Council Chamber, County Offices, Kendal, LA9 4RQ

PRESENT:

Mr W McEwan (Cumbria County Council) (Chair)

Mr RK Bingham, Cumbria County Council (Vice-Chair)

Mr KR Hamilton, Barrow Borough Council

Ms D Holden, Eden District Council

Mr MA Johnson, Cumbria County Council

Mr J Little, Independent Co-opted Member

Mr P McSweeney, South Lakeland District Council

Mr K Meller, Carlisle City Council

Mr A Smith, Allerdale Borough Council

Mr CP Turner, Cumbria County Council

Also in Attendance:-

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| Mr J Beard | - Chief Fire Officer |
| Ms M Bellis | - Deputy Chief Finance Officer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner |
| Mrs L Harker | - Senior Democratic Services Officer |
| Ms L Holme | - Office of the Cumbria Police and Crime Commissioner |
| Mr W Johnston | - Group Finance Manager |
| Ms C Killeen | - Strategic Policy and Scrutiny Manager |
| Mr R Marshall | - Joint Chief Finance Officer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner |
| Mr P McCall | - Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) |
| Mrs G Shearer | - Deputy Chief Executive - Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner |
| Mrs M Skeer | - Chief Constable - Cumbria Constabulary |
| Mr B Spencer | - Group Lawyer/Deputy Monitoring Officer |
| Ms V Stafford | - Chief Executive, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner |
| Mr K Timmins | - Office of the Cumbria Police and Crime Commissioner |

PART 1 – ITEMS CONSIDERED IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Ms R Hunter.

27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

28 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED, that the press and public be not excluded from the meeting for any items of business on this occasion.

29 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no items of public participation to be considered at this meeting.

30 MINUTES

It was agreed that Mr J Little should be added to the list of attendees for the meeting held on 14 October 2022.

RESOLVED, that with the inclusion of the above amendment the minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

31 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2022/23

(1) Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Budget Report

The Panel received a report from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) which provided the Commissioner's Financial Summary 2022/23 forecast as at 30 September 2022.

(2) Cumbria Constabulary Revenue Budget 2022/23

The Panel considered a report from Cumbria Constabulary which provided details of the Constabulary's Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/23.

The Panel was informed that the quarter 3 results were currently showing an on-budget position.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

32 POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER PRECEPT PROPOSALS

a Revenue Budget and Medium Term Financial Forecast

The Panel considered a report from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner which provided a detailed analysis of the figures contained within the Revenue budget for 2023/24 and the Medium Term Financial Forecast (MTFF) to 2027/28.

Members were also provided with a more detailed analysis of the budgets for 2023/24 together with comparative information from the 2022/23 approved budget, as well as additional information in respect of the more unusual aspects of the budget and explanations where the budgets had changed significantly between the years.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

b Draft Capital Programme 2023/24 and Beyond

Members received a report which provided information on the proposed Capital Programme for 2023/24 and beyond, both in terms of capital expenditure projections and the financing available to fund such expenditure. The Panel noted that the Capital Programme was developed in consultation with the Constabulary who were the primary user of the capital assets under the ownership of the Commissioner.

RESOLVED, that the proposed Capital Strategy for 2023/24 and beyond as part of the overall budget process for 2023/24 be noted.

c Precept Consultation Responses

The Panel received a verbal update on the Precept Consultation which took place during the period 16 December 2022-20 January 2023 and had received 411 responses of which 50% were in support of the proposal to increase the Council Tax.

RESOLVED, that the update be noted.

d **Precept Proposal and Medium Term Budget 2023/24 to 2027/28**

Members considered a report from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner which provided an overview of the medium term financial outlook together with the proposal for the precept that the Commissioner was presenting to the Panel for their views as part of the budget setting process.

The Panel noted that the precept proposal for 2023/24 was for an increase in precept of 5.3%, which was an increase of £14.94 per annum for a band D property and took the total Police element of the precept at band D to £297.09.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

The Panel welcomed the reports and held a detailed discussion.

Members were informed there was originally 1,120 full-time equivalent police officers with an anticipation that this would rise to 1,334 by the end of March 2023.

A discussion took place regarding the retention of police officers and a question was asked regarding any measures which were taken to try and reduce the number leaving the Force. The Chief Constable and Commissioner explained that due to a number of reasons, including the change in demographics, an increasing number did not consider the posts as long-term careers. The Panel was advised that a significant amount of support was provided for officers from leadership and management within the Force during their intensive training period.

The Panel discussed the recruitment of officers through Operation Uplift and was informed of the need to have a balance across the Service. Members were advised recruits included a range of diversity incorporating officers transferred from other forces, degree entry and promotion of existing Police Community Support Officers.

A discussion took place regarding the Premises Related Expenditure budget and a question was raised regarding the use of Cockermouth Police Station. The Chief Constable confirmed that this was a busy Station where Officers were still based with access for the public being provided by appointment only.

Members asked for an update with regards to the Hunter Lane site. Officers advised that the changes to the local government boundaries entailed a need for the policing model to align to the new structure, therefore, there had been a requirement to bolster policing resources in

Eden. It was explained that to facilitate this a new scheme to improve the existing facilities had been added for Hunter Lane within the Estates Programme.

A question was raised regarding the Barrow Island Interview Suite and it was confirmed this was a specialised location for young people.

The Panel discussed expenditure on the provision of supplies and services and questioned why the custody costs had decreased by 11%. Officers advised that this was due to a renegotiation of the Custody Medical Contract.

A Member raised a concern regarding the low net capital receipt for the sale of Police properties. Officers confirmed that all properties were professionally valued and sold at the open market value.

The Panel discussed the replacement hostel accommodation on the HQ site at Penrith which had been fully occupied due to Operation Uplift and asked whether there was an intention to share services with other emergency services in the future. The Commissioner confirmed that all viable options would be considered in the future.

Members noted the Other Schemes which included works to expand and replace the countywide CCTV system and asked whether this would also include additional systems. Officers advised that it was currently the intention to upgrade existing systems.

The Panel, whilst acknowledging the problems were outside their remit, raised concerns regarding the number of second homes in the county which ultimately affected Council Tax income.

The Chair, on behalf of the Panel, thanked officers for their detailed reports.

33 DRAFT POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER PRECEPT PROPOSALS 2023/24

Members considered a report by the Interim Director of Finance (Cumbria County Council) which accompanied the report from the Police and Crime Commissioner setting out the proposed budget and precept for 2023/2024 explaining the Panel's options for decision-making.

The Panel was asked to review the proposed precept and decide whether to, support the precept without qualification or comment, support the precept and make recommendations or veto the proposed precept.

Ms D Holden raised her concerns regarding the proposed increase due to the current economic climate.

It was MOVED by Mr K Meller and SECONDED by Mr J Little that the increase in precept of 5.3% be supported without qualification. Following a vote of the motion with nine members in favour and one abstention, it was

RESOLVED, that the increase in precept of 5.3% be supported without qualification.

34 CUMBRIA COMMISSIONER FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY (CCFRA) BUDGET 2023/24, PROPOSED PRECEPT LEVEL AND FINANCIAL FORECASTS 2023/24 TO 2027/28

The Panel received a report which detailed the first budget and precept proposal for the Cumbria Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (CCFRA) which was established on a shadow basis on 1 January 2023 and came into formal existence on 1 April 2023 together and also set out the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

Members were informed the proposal was to set the first Fire 2023/24 Precept at a Band D Council Tax of £90.54. The Panel noted this was an increase of £4.93 on the 2022/23 "alternative notional amount" level of £85.61 used to calculate precept excessiveness levels.

The Panel was advised of the significant challenges against the backdrop of the Local Government Review and officers emphasised the need for the base to be right from the start.

Members welcomed the report and asked whether schemes would be investigated to reduce Capital expenditure now that the Cumbria Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (CCFRA) had been established. The Commissioner advised that once the Fire Service became embedded the direction of travel would be to consider a Strategic Plan to look at potential areas to find efficiencies.

A discussion took place regarding costs associated with Assumptions and any incentives with regards to fire prevention, highlighting the importance of smoke alarms and prevention work. Officers confirmed that the installation of smoke alarms in homes would continue and highlighted the significant savings provided through prevention work, therefore, the reluctance to scope this down.

The Panel discussed the transfer of resources from Cumbria County Council on vesting day. Members were informed that due to the complexity and high risk of ICT this function would be hosted by one of

the new authorities through a Service Level Agreement. The Commissioner advised that his ambition was for the delivery of a seamless transition of frontline services on 1 April 2023.

Members welcomed the report and acknowledged the challenges ahead.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

35 DRAFT CUMBRIA FIRE SERVICE PRECEPT PROPOSALS 2023/24

Members considered a report by the Interim Director of Finance (Cumbria County Council) which accompanied the report from the Police and Crime Commissioner setting out the proposed budget and precept for 2023/2024 explaining the Panel's options for decision-making.

The Panel was asked to review the proposed precept and decide whether to, support the precept without qualification or comment, support the precept and make recommendations or veto the proposed precept.

It was **MOVED** by Mr K Hamilton and **SECONDED** by Mr P Turner that the proposal to set the first Fire 2023/24 Precept at a Band D Council Tax of £90.54 be supported without qualification. Following a unanimous vote in favour of the motion, it was

RESOLVED, that the Precept at a Band D Council Tax of £90.54 be supported without qualification.

36 UPDATE ON COMPLAINTS

Members received a report from the Monitoring Officer (Cumbria County Council) which advised of any complaints received in accordance with the Panel's complaints procedure. The report outlined where appropriate, what, if any, action had been taken in respect of the complaints.

The Panel was informed that since the last report, no further complaints had been received and no previous correspondence had progressed.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

37 PANEL UPDATE REPORT

Members received a report from the Strategic Policy and Scrutiny Advisor (Cumbria County Council) which gave an update on key issues and developments that had occurred since the last meeting of the Panel on

14 October 2022. The information detailed an update on the progress on Fire Governance, Serious Violence Duty, Independent Evaluation of Safer Streets Fund and Police and Crime Panel Work Programme.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

38 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the Confirmatory Hearings in the afternoon would be the last meeting of the Panel in the life of Cumbria County Council. Officers explained that dates for future meetings of the Panel were yet to be agreed.

The Chair, on behalf of the Panel, thanked all officers for their support and wished them well for the future.

The Commissioner conveyed his thanks and gratitude to the Panel for their constructive challenge and support during its tenure and wished everyone well for the future.

The meeting ended at 12.10 pm