



# STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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## COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

### MEMBER REPORT

<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION/BODY</b>	Police and Crime Panel
<b>DATE OF LAST MEETING ATTENDED</b>	1st July 2022

#### BRIEF REPORT

##### **1 July 2022 Meeting:**

Cllr Steve Robinson was elected the new Panel Chair and Sajid Patel the new Vice-Chair unanimously.

The Police Commissioner gave a verbal report on progress on key parts of the strategy and election commitments given before a presentation on actions taken in response to the HMICFRS report. The main points being:-

- The commissioner noted the recent media interest of the force being put into 'engaged status', or special measures as it incorrectly terms it, the report included areas where the force was considered good as well as a number of areas which were rated as poor. The next meeting with the inspectorate was later in July for a progress update.
- One area of improvement from the report was crime recording of lesser crimes which has increased over recent crime reporting up about 5,000.
- The force control room continues to under perform and the answering of 999 or 101 calls remains below standard despite the increase in resources, post covid has increased the number of calls being received. So, the commissioner proposes to introduce more resources to improve the situation together with a review of its management.
- The force continues to work with other forces in the South-West on joint operations with a further one next week.
- The commissioner's office is applying for a number of bids to gain more resources totalling c£7m at present and is confident that many of these will be successful.
- The business case to implement a new records system to create efficiencies and modernise the forces operations has been approved, together with a new HR system to support the recruitment drive for special constables
- The commissioner further reported on the Restorative justice initiative in assisting victims and helping offenders take responsibility for their actions with the victim remaining in control throughout.
- The force is working with Gloucestershire County council on their road safety initiative supporting advice and sending out warning letters.

In response to questions on the report the following additional issue was discussed:

- The Commissioner agreed Fraud and scamming risk is a problem and referring to putting additional resources and engagement with GCHQ as ways this was being responded to,
- The Commissioner reported that missing persons take a great deal of effort to investigation with 4 or 5 forms needed which agencies responsibility it is to lead on this

particularly if the individual has mental health needs and cited that social care in Gloucestershire is lacking.

- On in response to questions on the annual independent custody report, the commissioner acknowledged that there were few visitors from ethnic backgrounds, and he hoped this would improve over the next recruitment phase, while he encouraged members to attend the next open day of the custody suite.
- In response to a question on the annual report on environment again cited those Electric vehicles (EV) have their place but not in the front line, but police buildings are being fitted with solar panels and they all have EV charging points.

#### **4 November 2022 Meeting:**

The two new Independent members were ratified and welcomed to the panel and give a brief resume of themselves.

The Police Commissioner gave a verbal report on progress current plans and initiatives.

- Informed the panel that £2m had been awarded for the safer streets pilot in July and was up and running  
For those who wish to report concerns experienced in public spaces to the police.
- That the constabulary had received a higher funding per head of population than anywhere else in the country and there were multiple bids still being placed by the OPCC team.
- More automatic number plate recognition technology had been deployed to primarily tackle cross-country drug activity and this was having some success.
- The dog chipping initiative which started in Gloucester has now been taken up by five other counties and the commissioner is hopeful more will take it up as it needs many counties to adopt for it to be fully effective.
- Phase 2 of the speed watch funding scheme will be available soon following the success of the first phase to provide advice and equipment to local community groups to tackle speeding in their neighbourhoods
- There has been considerable engagement following incidents in Stroud and women's groups which have highlighted the issue of crimes on women by men and there is a follow-up meeting soon.
- The first voluntary constables completed their training, who commit to a minimum of 16 hours a month, although many have committed to more hours.
- A further 18 new posts have been agreed to support the continuing programme for the constabulary to come out of 'engaged status' – the force control room remains a weakness however and perhaps one of the most difficult aspects to address.

In response to questions:

- The PCC reassured the panel that all new officers and those transferring are rigorously vetted before acceptance.
- That following review of the approach taken at this year's Cheltenham races the approach towards policing of large events has changed.
- That the force had visited a number of other constabularies in seeking good practice and that the peer review by Humberside had been particularly helpful.

Presentations were given on contact, complaints and reviews by members of the OPCC team, which were well received by the panel and provided good insight into the challenges of the team. In particular the first-hand account of a complaint handler who individually receives a very large number of wide-ranging calls, many not related to the OPCC. Some callers just want to someone to complain about, many are seeking help in very difficult circumstances which the contact team members have to deal with. It was reassuring for the panel that due to the strong team bond within the OPCC and access to professional support for those receiving the calls.

Following questions it was agreed by the panel that these presentations direct from OPCC staff were helpful and that further ones will be organised.

The new CEO gave a brief update on changes made to the team structure which included the removal of some senior posts and creation of other posts.

<b>REPORT SUBMITTED BY</b>	Cllr Martin Percy
<b>DATE</b>	5th August 2022 / 15 November 2022