

**GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL
MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON 22 OCTOBER 2021 AT THE TOOTAL BUILDING,
MANCHESTER**

PRESENT:

Councillor Janet Emsley, Rochdale Council (Chair)
Councillor Rabnawaz Akbar, Manchester City Council
Councillor Kevin Anderson, Wigan Council
Councillor Lisa Boyle, Tameside Borough Council
Councillor David Lancaster, Salford Council
Councillor Amanda Peers, Stockport Council
Councillor Graham Whitham, Trafford Council
Councillor Steve Williams, Oldham Council (Vice-Chair)
Angela Lawrence, Independent Member

Also in attendance: Baroness Beverley Hughes, Deputy Mayor.

Officers Present:

Assistant Chief Constable Chris Sykes, GMP
Steve Wilson, Treasurer, GMCA
Clare Monaghan, Director, Police, Crime, Criminal Justice and Fire, GMCA
Steve Annette, Governance and Scrutiny, GMCA

PCFP/32/21 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Richard Gold, Bury Council
Majid Hussain, Independent Member, and Jeanette Staley, GM Police & Crime Policy
Lead, Salford City Council.

PCFP/33/21 CHAIR ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair informed the Panel that a request had been received from GMP to provide a verbal update regarding the HMICFRS engagement, including accelerated cause for concern. The Panel agreed to receive the update following consideration of the Police and Crime Plan refresh update.

PCFP/34/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

PCFP/35/21 MINUTES OF THE PANEL HELD ON 22 JULY 2021

Members were asked to note and agree the minutes of the Panel meeting held on 22 July 2021.

It was noted that proposals in relation to the proposed extended balanced appointments to the Panel had been lodged with the Home Office and a formal response was awaited, in the meantime nominations had been requested from the Districts.

The Chair advised the Panel that an update report on iOPS would be considered at the next ordinary meeting as planned.

RESOLVED/-

That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2021 be agreed by the Panel.

PCFP/36/21 POLICE AND CRIME PLAN REFRESH

Beverley Hughes, Deputy Mayor, introduced a report and the Standing Together - The GM Police and Crime Plan, highlighting the key issues that had arisen from consultation and engagement with district community partnerships, GMP and other partners, and the proposed next steps and key dates.

The report set out in some detail the extensive consultation that had been undertaken on the Plan, and also outlined some key changes that now needed to be included and taken account of in the Plan. The GM Mayor had set out a number of priorities in his 2021 election manifesto including measures to improve public accountability and to focus on community policing and improved communication between the public and the Police through collaborative partnerships, and the responsiveness of the Police Force on a range of fronts. The Plan further set out key strategies in relation to public safety, supporting victims, enforcement, hate crime and on-line crime, and placed these in the post-Covid and overall resource context.

In discussion members highlighted –

- the wide-ranging ambitions and challenges set out in the report, and whilst accepting that an over-arching strategy was essential, the special needs of districts and partnerships must continue to find proper focus and balanced expression within it;
- the importance of benchmarking with other Forces was highlighted and a member sought clarification about the extent to which this had already found expression in the refreshed Plan, accepting that there will be significant variability between Forces depending on the areas of focus dominant in different regions;
- the importance of community partnership working and of early interventions with vulnerable people and groups needing additional targeted support;
- the importance of emphasising that the focus on support to victims of crime represents an important step-change in the Force's approach;
- that the gender-based crime and racial crime elements of the Plan refresh are necessarily ambitious and challenging and will involve significant levels of support and resources, and
- the need to look afresh at the ways of engaging with minority communities to overcome historical mistrust issues and to embed action to redress racial disparities in mainstream policing practice.

RESOLVED/-

1. To note progress made towards the refresh of the Police and Crime Plan.

2. To note the comments above, the emerging priorities and plan structure, together with the next steps and milestones.

PFCP/38/21 HMICFRS ENGAGEMENT

ACC Chris Sykes, GMP provided a verbal update in relation to HMICRFS engagement, including accelerated cause for concern. He reported that in addition to the three causes for concern identified initially by HMI, the most recent was in relation to (a) failures to respond appropriately to vulnerable/at risk people in terms of call-handling response times, and (b) response to requests (2000) for action awaiting responses (figure now reduced to 1250)

He outlined the need to recruit more call handling staff and to accelerate training and refine job descriptions. Newly appointed Superintendent now taking responsibility for this area of work. Replacement of the vehicle fleet has resulted in some improvements in response times due to increased reliability. Graded response policy needs to be reviewed and simplified with greater use of scheduled appointments with victims, either face to face, telephone or Zoom, together with changes to the local policing model to improve responsiveness.

Members accepted that these figures and the depleted morale of front-line call staffs directly reflected the past reductions in police officers and back-office staffs and elegantly highlighted the false economies that those resource reductions represented.

Officers were also asked if they had the necessary resources and expertise to respond to this reported cause for concern. In response ACC Sykes that a lot of work remained to be done but the streamlined organisation of business side of the Force and the performance measures in place was beginning to make an impact, but a 'quick fix' was not the answer, and morale and welfare will best be lifted by strategies that deliver sustainable improvements and where the staff themselves know that they are increasingly capable of delivering the services and responses that the public need

RESOLVED/-

To note the update and next steps.