

West Yorkshire Police & Crime Panel

Supporting and Scrutinising the
Police and Crime Commissioner
for West Yorkshire

Annual Report 2014/15



WEST YORKSHIRE
POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

contents

1.	Foreword by the Chair of the Police and Crime Panel
2.	The Police and Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire
3.	Background to the Police and Crime Panel
4.	Key Activity and Achievements in 2014/15
5.	Moving Forward
6.	Panel Membership 2014/15



Foreword



The West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel have just completed its second full year. We would like to report to the West Yorkshire residents, the five district councils and other partners on what we have done during the past year and what our intentions are for the coming year.

The Panel has rigorously scrutinised the Police and Crime Commissioner's decisions over the past year and provided him with the opportunity to explain how this will improve life for the people in West Yorkshire. Whilst there is still much work to do to achieve those ambitions, we believe we are making good progress and where it is warranted, the Panel are keen to commend the Commissioner's good work. Although the electorate will ultimately have its say, the Panel has a role in looking into the Commissioner's decisions and making sure that the public has access to information so that they can make their choice.

The people of West Yorkshire can be reassured that, acting on their behalf, the Panel is committed to exercising its statutory duties of holding the Commissioner to account for the delivery of his Police and Crime Plan and supporting him by adding value to his work wherever possible.

We intend for the Panel's work to remain rigorous and relevant. For up-to-date information, please visit the Panel's website and if you have any suggestions about what we could do better, please let the Panel know. Our contact details can be found at the end of this report.

Kind regards

Councillor Alison Lowe

Chair, West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel

2.



**West Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner
Mark Burns-Williamson, said:**

“I have worked closely with the Panel throughout the year, having meetings on a regular basis.

One of the key areas we have been jointly working on is the implementation of the Crawford Review which has looked at how we can all improve the way that complaints are dealt with by West Yorkshire Police. This is a vital issue that needs addressing and by working together we can make sure the system is improved and that complaints are dealt with in an open and transparent way.

“I have also worked with members of the Panel to address how we can make our Public Performance Report more public and user friendly. I, and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), have listened to those suggestions and are acting upon them to improve the reporting.

“In December the Panel confirmed my appointment of Katherine Johnson as Treasurer at the OPCC – a welcome addition to the team. In February, the Panel endorsed my recommended budget for 2015/16 to recruit 82 new police officers and supported my planning for the next three years.

“I feel it has been a positive year working with the Panel to make things better for the people in West Yorkshire and I will continue to work closely with them to ensure our communities are safer and feel safer in what are very challenging times for the police service.”

3.

The introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and Police and Crime Panels (PCPs) was a key feature of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. The West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel is made up of twelve locally elected councillors and two independent members from across West Yorkshire. The Panel meets in public eight times a year, publishes agendas and minutes, and fulfils certain key statutory responsibilities.

The Panel holds the Police and Crime Commissioner to account by acting as a ‘critical friend’. Its role is to scrutinise, challenge and support the Commissioner, maintaining ‘checks and balances’ on the performance of the Commissioner in respect of the strategic actions and decisions made. The Panel is not responsible for holding the Chief Constable or the Constabulary to account and is not a replacement for the Police Authority.

Statutory Powers and Responsibilities of the Panel

The Panel’s powers include:

- Making recommendations on the Commissioner’s draft Police and Crime Plan. The Plan is a document setting out the Commissioner’s priorities for a three-year period and how those priorities will be delivered.
- Making recommendations about the Commissioner’s proposed policing budget and precept. The precept is the amount of money that the Commissioner proposes to levy on council taxpayers in West Yorkshire. The budget sets out how both the money raised from the precept will be spent, and also how other funds over which the Commissioner has control will be spent. The Panel has the power, if appropriate, to veto the proposed precept level. The Panel can also require that the precept should be higher or lower than proposed.
- Reviewing the Commissioner’s Annual Report, outlining his activities in the previous year and his performance against the targets set in the Police and Crime Plan.

Statutory Powers and Responsibilities of the Panel

The Panel’s powers include:

- Holding Confirmatory Hearings for the proposed appointment of senior staff working for the Commissioner, such as the Chief Executive, Chief Financial Officer and Deputy PCC. The Panel cannot refuse appointments but can make recommendations to the Commissioner.
- Holding Confirmatory Hearings in relation to the proposed appointment of a Chief Constable by the Commissioner. The Panel has the power, if appropriate, to veto the proposed appointment.
- Monitoring and working to resolve, but not investigate, non-criminal complaints against the Commissioner.
- Requiring the Commissioner and his senior staff to attend Panel meetings to answer questions and provide information, so that the Panel can scrutinise the decisions of the Commissioner and subsequently respond with a report and/or recommendations, if necessary.

4.

Police and Crime Plan refresh

The Commissioners Police and Crime Plan sets out the strategic direction for policing and community safety across West Yorkshire. The Panel has a responsibility to review the Police and Crime Commissioner's draft Police and Crime Plan and make recommendations to the Commissioner to which he must formally respond.

In April 2014, the Commissioner made a refresh to his plan for 2013-2018 and the Panel reviewed the 2014 refreshed plan. The Panel was pleased to see that the Commissioner had taken on board

many of the comments that were made by the Panel the previous year when he produced his first Police and Crime Plan. A key criticism at that time had been around the lack of targets and measures.

While the Panel still feels that the Plan would benefit from more statistical evidence, the inclusion of some measures is a welcome step in the right direction. The Panel also welcomed the commitment by the Commissioner and Chief Constable that the Chief Constable's own internal performance ambitions are to be reported on in public through the Annual Report.

Cllr Alison Lowe, Chair of the Police and Crime Panel stated *"We think it is incredibly important that the public is able to understand how the Commissioner will make sure he is achieving his objectives and doing a good job on their behalf. As a Panel, we are keen to support the Commissioner and welcome his assurances that we can work together more closely in the future to ensure the best policing outcomes for the people of West Yorkshire."*

Working with Partners - Assessing the impact of the Commissioner at a local level

It is important that the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel and the local Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and local Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Boards within the districts have a close and co-operative working relationship which helps them to better understand the link between the strategic direction set by the Police and Crime Commissioner and its impact on crime and community safety in individual wards and neighbourhoods.

A set of Principles of Engagement that cover respective roles and the need to work closely together, have been agreed by the CSPs, the Scrutiny Boards and the Panel. This provides the foundation for the quarterly 'Local Perspectives' report which enables the Panel to better understand the impact of the Commissioner within West Yorkshire and the provision of information that help Partnerships to keep aware of Panel work. Whilst information is relayed back to the Partnerships and Committees that have provided information for the Panel, this is further underpinned by Panel members de-briefing colleagues in constituent areas in order to put it in a firmer local context.

As well as the Panel receiving regular local perspective update reports over the year, it has also met with the CSP and Scrutiny Board Chairs and considered the Commissioner's impact at a local level. Panel have been informed by CSPs how the Commissioner is supporting their local priorities and how they are working at a local level to ensure that they can contribute to delivering the Commissioner's priorities within the Police and Crime Plan.

Improved performance reporting

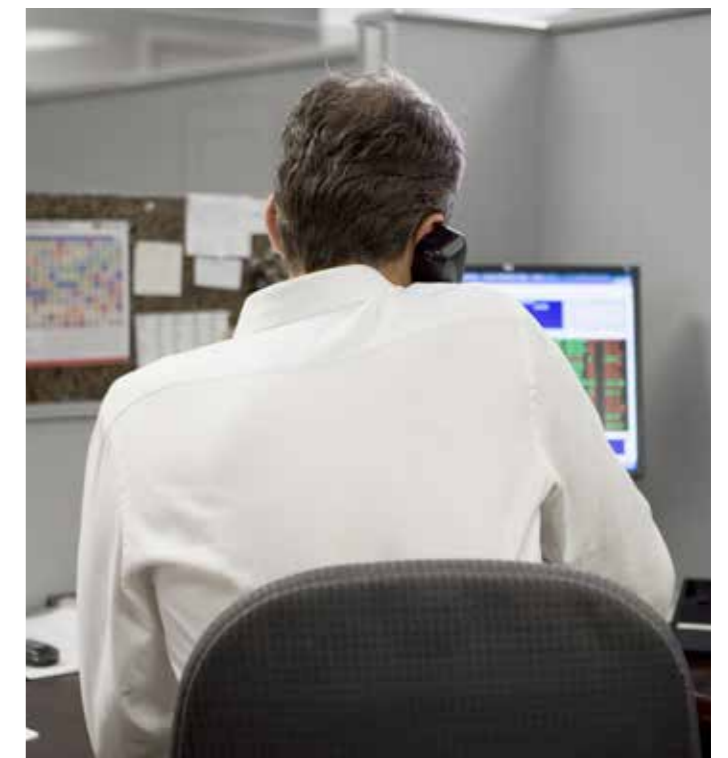
A lead Panel Member has worked with the Police and Crime Panel Officer and colleagues from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to develop an improved quarterly performance report for the Panel. The purpose of the report is to assist Panel in their role in holding the Commissioner to account for delivery of the objectives within his Police and Crime Plan. Through joint working and a shared understanding of the restrictions placed on benchmarking data, the Panel have an easy to understand oversight of Force performance and the steps taken by the Commissioner to hold the Chief Constable to account.

Roger Grasby, the Panel's lead Member on Performance, commented *"It is important for the public in West Yorkshire to be able to clearly understand how the Force is performing in meeting the Commissioner's priorities and as a Panel we are pleased that the Commissioner has taken previous comments on board and worked with the Panel to produce information which is much more user-friendly."*

Improving Crime Data Integrity Scrutiny

Following concerns highlighted in a report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) into crime data recording within West Yorkshire, the Police and Crime Panel challenged the Commissioner on how he is ensuring that the Force implements the HMIC recommendations to improve crime recording and what plans there are to revisit historical cases to ensure that crimes relating to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) have been recorded properly. The Panel have received regular comprehensive updates on the progress made against the HMIC's recommendations.

Whilst the Panel have been reassured by the Commissioner's ongoing commitment to improving the recording of crime in West Yorkshire Police, they feel that there is still much to be done and the Panel will continue to monitor and challenge the Commissioner on progress. The Panel will reconsider this further at a future meeting of the Panel following the re-inspection by HMIC in the summer of 2015.



Non-emergency Call Handling

The Panel have sought assurances from the Commissioner about 101 non-emergency call handling performance following a BBC investigation. The investigation showed that response times around the country for 101 non-emergency calls were extremely poor, or that calls were initially answered by automated systems within a short time and then kept on hold for very long periods.

Panel have discussed with the Commissioner what he is doing to ensuring that West Yorkshire's performance improves and how the 101 service can be established on a more sustainable footing. Panel will continue to receive further updates on how the Commissioner is addressing this issue.

Dealing with Complaints about the Commissioner

As part of their complaints handling role, the Police and Crime Panel formed a Complaints Sub Panel of Members to consider two separate complaints against the Commissioner. Members were mindful of the limited powers that the Panel have in dealing with complaints against the Commissioner and that it was not within their remit to conduct an investigation. The Complaints Sub Panel carefully considered the information provided by both complainants and, in close liaison with the Service Director: Legal and Governance at Wakefield Council, agreed a way forward with the Commissioner. When both complainants exercised their right to appeal, the full Police and Crime Panel considered both appeals in December. The Panel supported the Complaints Sub Panel's findings and agreed to not uphold both appeals. As a result,

the Panel wrote to the Policing Minister Mike Penning outlining the limitations with the current powers assigned to Panels when dealing with complaints. Panel also made recommendations to the Commissioner as to how he could improve the process for complaints which are directed to his office. Panel Officers also received positive feedback from one complainant on the way in which their complaint was dealt with. Councillor Alan Wassell, the Panel's lead Member on complaints stated *"We are committed to ensuring that the Panel fulfils its statutory duty when dealing with non-criminal complaints about the Commissioner or Deputy Commissioner from members of the public. We will ensure that all complaints against the Commissioner are dealt with in a robust and fair manner, in line with the powers afforded to all police and crime panels"*.



Ensuring Value for Money from the Transformation Fund

The Panel receive regular updates on the allocation of the £20m Force Transformation Fund which has been established from a transfer from the significant reserves that had accumulated from previous years' underspend. Funding has been allocated across ten project areas which are regarded as being key in transforming the organisation and having a significant impact on both the strategic priorities within the Police and Crime Plan and on critical operational and organisational issues.

The Panel have challenged the Commissioner regarding the progress of the projects and sought reassurances that the benefits and longer term efficiency savings are clearly understood before funding is fully committed. Panel have received assurances from the Commissioner that projects will be adequately reviewed and expected outcomes and potential savings are monitored and measured at each stage of the project plan. The Transformation Fund is a two year programme and Panel will continue to receive updates from the Commissioner on the progress and of the projects throughout the year.

Reviewing and Approving the Commissioner's Precept Proposal

After posing a series of challenging questions to the Commissioner about his proposal and the budget assumptions that underpinned it, the Panel agreed to approve the 1.99% increase in the policing precept. The Panel emphasised that their support for the increased precept was based on the Commissioner's commitment to recruit a further 82 police officers in 2014/15 reflecting, where possible, the diversity of West Yorkshire. The Panel will receive regular updates on the Commissioner's budget throughout the year to ensure that he fulfils the commitments that he has made.

Councillor Les Carter, Lead Panel Member on Finance said *"I am delighted that the Panel has been able to get an outcome that is good for the people of West Yorkshire to keep frontline policing as strong as possible and ensure the service is fit for the 21st Century. The Panel has a clear plan to hold the Police and Crime Commissioner to account for the spending agreed today and we will be reporting to residents of West Yorkshire through our website to give assurances about value for money."*

Reviewing the long-term use of Police Bail

In May 2013, analysis by the BBC found that West Yorkshire Police had the highest proportion of people held on long-term police bail. The Panel discussed with the Commissioner what action he has taken along with the Chief Constable on the use of pre-charge bail across the Force. The Panel received assurances that since then, in May 2014, a new bail policy for West Yorkshire had come into effect. This has led to some changes in how bail is managed across the Force including the reconfiguration of custody suites.

The Panel will continue to receive updates on this issue to ensure that the necessary improvements are implemented.

Delivering the Objectives within the Police and Crime Plan

The Panel have discussed with the Commissioner and the Temporary Chief Constable the delivery of the objectives within the Police and Crime Plan. The Panel has heard how the Commissioner holds the Temporary Chief Constable to account and how the Commissioner provides direction and challenge whilst responsibility for operational matters remains with the Temporary Chief Constable.

The Panel received assurances that the Force's performance management data, comparative data from iQuanta and the Force Control Strategy are all used to inform discussions with the Commissioner as part of the regular joint Community Outcomes meetings.

Panel also receive regular Force performance management data to inform their discussions with the Commissioner and enable them to see what impact the Commissioner is having on making communities in West Yorkshire safer and feel safer.

The Strategic Policing Requirement

The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) sets out the threats which require a national policing capability to ensure they are tackled effectively. The threats include terrorism, civil emergencies, organised crime, threats to public order, and large-scale cyber incidents. All forces and police and crime commissioners must have regard to the SPR when setting their local policing plans.

The Panel have discussed with the Temporary Chief Constable and the Commissioner the implications of the SPR for West Yorkshire and the balance of responding to national threats and the priorities for policing in West Yorkshire. Panel considered the risk/balance aspects and how often these were reviewed and what informs this review. Assurances have been given that whilst there are specific obligations of the SPR on all forces, the main focus lies with protecting the public of West Yorkshire.

In March 2015, the Strategic Policing Requirement was amended to include child sexual abuse due to the large increases in the number of alleged cases. Whilst child sexual abuse is not a threat to national security, it is a threat of national importance and its potential magnitude and impact necessitate a cohesive, consistent, national effort to ensure police and partners can safeguard children from harm. The Panel will, therefore, be discussing the implications of this addition with the Commissioner and Chief Constable in the coming months. Jo Sykes has been nominated as the lead Panel Member for the Strategic Policing Requirement.



Holding Confirmation hearings for Commissioner's Senior Appointments

The Police and Crime Panel has a statutory responsibility to review appointments of senior staff of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire.

Following formal notification from the Commissioner of his intention to appoint a Treasurer in December 2014, the Police and Crime Panel held a public 'Confirmation Hearing' to make their assessment and consider their recommendations as to the suitability of the Commissioner's proposed candidate, Katherine Johnson. At the public 'Confirmation Hearing' Panel Members asked Katherine a series of questions to enable them to assess her suitability for the role.

On the basis of Katherine's responses at the Hearing and the supporting documents provided by the Commissioner, the Panel felt assured that the candidate was able to take on the role of Treasurer to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire.

The Chair of the Police and Crime Panel, Councillor Alison Lowe said "As a Panel, we needed to satisfy ourselves that Katherine is capable of carrying out the role and functions accorded to this post by the Commissioner. On this basis, we felt able to endorse the appointment of Katherine to the role of Treasurer to the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire. We look forward to working with Katherine going forward as the Commissioner develops his financial plans alongside his commitments to oversee long-term transformation of the Force."



Ensuring Child Sexual Exploitation is a key priority

In August 2014 the publication was made of the high profile inquiry carried out by Professor Alexis Jay into how both the police and local council in Rotherham failed to stop child exploitation over a period of 16 years.

The Police and Crime Panel have held a series of discussions with the Commissioner to establish what is being done in West Yorkshire to tackle CSE and how West Yorkshire can learn lessons from the issues which have been identified in the Rotherham report. In addition to this, following the publication of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC's) National Child Protection Inspection in January the Police and Crime Panel further probed the Commissioner to understand how the HMIC recommendations for West Yorkshire are being implemented.

The Commissioner has given regular updates on the actions that he has taken along with partner organisations and his commitment to constantly review, develop and improve approaches to get as close as possible to eradicating child sexual exploitation. Panel have been assured that eradicating CSE is a key priority for the Commissioner and he has allocated additional funding to the police for increased capacity to deal with CSE, human trafficking and cyber-crime.

The Chair of the Police and Crime Panel, Councillor Alison Lowe said *"As a Panel, we needed to satisfy ourselves that the Commissioner is holding the force to account on its response to the recommendations from the recent HMIC National Child Protection Inspection. We are pleased that this remains a key priority for the Commissioner and that he has given assurances that he will provide funding to help and support victims, both past and present as well as making sure that the perpetrators of this terrible crime are brought to justice."*



Ensuring a balanced strategic workforce

As part of the Panel's agreement to the Commissioner's precept proposal for 2014/15 the Commissioner agreed to introduce, alongside the Chief Constable, a strategic approach to the use of Special Constables, including in specialist areas like cyber and financial crime to supplement the strength of the Force.

The Commissioner has provided Panel with regular updates on the recruitment of Special Constables and Police Volunteers.

The Commissioner has regularly given an overview of the key issues that are being considered as part of the development of the Force's workforce strategy to ensure that the Force is equipped with the right number of people, with the right skills deployed to the right locations to ensure that communities are safer and feel safer.

Panel have also sought assurances that any new recruitment of Police Officers mirrors the diversity of West Yorkshire to ensure that the West Yorkshire Force becomes reflective of its population.

Home Office visit to a Panel Meeting

David Livesey from the Police Reform Unit within the Home Office attended the Panel meeting on 6 March 2015. David was keen to visit different Panels across the country in order to see first-hand how Panels held their Commissioner to account.

David was impressed with the level of scrutiny, challenge and support that the West Yorkshire Panel demonstrated. He provided positive feedback to Members at the meeting and took away several examples of good practice which would be disseminated to other Panels across the country.

The Home Office visit also proved useful for Panel Members who were able to ask questions on the government's proposals around PCC recall and the consultation on complaints and police integrity.

Other areas of acti by the Panel during 2014/15 include:

- Working with the Commissioner and his officer to improve communication with the Panel and developed a mechanism to monitor the progress of actions agreed by the Commissioner
- Ensuring the Commissioner's Key Decisions are recorded and published on PCC website in a timely manner
- Receiving regular updates from the Commissioner on Community Outcomes meetings
- Providing Panel response to various national consultations
- Improving public accessibility by live-streaming Panel meetings on the internet

5.

West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel will continue its commitment in holding the Commissioner to account in order to secure an efficient and effective police force for the people of West Yorkshire. We are pleased to be recognised nationally as a beacon Panel and will continue to seek opportunities to share best practice with other Panels.

Over the next twelve months the Panel will focus on the following key areas:

- Review the Commissioner's Annual report
- Monitor the outcomes within the Police and Crime Plan
- Hold the Commissioner to account for the delivery of his precept commitments
- Continue our oversight of the £20m Transformation Fund
- Maximise external funding, including Home Office Innovation Funding
- Continue to monitor progress on improving crime data integrity
- Work with the Commissioner to ensure the development of a Strategic Workforce Plan
- Ensure that the Commissioner and the Chief Constable recruit retain and progress a workforce which reflects the communities it serves
- Monitor the Estates Strategy, ensuring that the Commissioner is actively seeking opportunities for co-location and cost saving initiatives
- Support the Commissioner to maximise opportunities for joint working
- Liaise with HMIC to improve understanding of West Yorkshire Police's performance
- Review the Strategic Policing Requirement and the impact on West Yorkshire Police
- Scrutinise Victim Services' commissioning arrangements
- Improve public engagement
- Provide ongoing Panel Member development
- Ensure CSE remains a key priority

6.

The West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel 31 March 2015



Cllr Alison Lowe
(Chair)



Cllr Alan Wassell
(Vice Chair)



Cllr Masood Ahmed



Cllr Les Carter



Roger Grasby



Cllr Khadim Hussain



Cllr Mohammed Iqbal



Cllr Shakeela Lal



Cllr Ann Martin



Cllr Phil Scott



Cllr Jacquie Speight



Jo Sykes



Cllr Marcus Thompson



Cllr Michael Walls

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Previous Police and Crime Panel Members who left during 2014/15

Councillor Celia Loughran

Councillor Steve Sweeney

Councillor Imran Hussain

