



Draft Minutes of a meeting of the

West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel

Friday 5th February 2021, held via video conference

PRESENT:	Councillor Mohammed Iqbal	- Leeds City Council (Chair)
	Councillor Tariq Hussain	- Bradford Council
	Councillor Russell Brown	- Bradford Council
	Councillor Richard Dunbar	- Bradford Council
	Councillor Susan Press	- Calderdale Council
	Councillor Sophie Whittaker	- Calderdale Council
	Councillor Masood Ahmed	- Kirklees Council
	Councillor Cahal Burke	- Kirklees Council
	Councillor Mark Thompson	- Kirklees Council
	Councillor Barry Anderson	- Leeds City Council
	Councillor Peter Gruen	- Leeds City Council
	Councillor Stuart Heptinstall	- Wakefield Council
	Councillor Jacquie Williams	- Wakefield Council
	Mr Roger Grasby	- Independent
	Mrs Jo Sykes	- Independent

1. Acceptance of apologies for absence

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Councillor Amanda Carter (Leeds) who was substituted by Councillor Barry Anderson, and Councillor Mohammed Naeem (Calderdale) who was substituted by Councillor Susan Press.

2. Minutes of the meeting held 22nd January 2021

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting were agreed as a correct record.

3. To note any items which the Chair has agreed to add to the agenda on the grounds of urgency

- 3.1 The Chair confirmed there were no items to add to the agenda.

4. Members' Declaration of Interests

4.1 There were no declarations of interest

5. PCC Precept Proposal for 2021/22

5.1 The Commissioner presented a report to the Panel on his proposed precept for 2021/22.

5.2 The PCC reported on key issues from the settlement including:

5.2.1 The Police Uplift programme which is continuing with a reduced national recruitment target of 8000 to 6000 for 2021/22.

5.2.2 The extremely low capital grant allocation of £0.45m for West Yorkshire which presents immediate and ongoing challenges.

5.2.3 The significant top-slicing for national programmes including the technology programmes

5.2.4 The longer term funding position for Policing which is still unclear with the one year settlement and still no resolution of the funding formula review.

5.3 The PCC reported on the budget position:

5.3.1 The force has achieved a balanced budget this year but even if the planned savings are met, there are still significant predicted budget shortfalls for future years.

5.3.2 The need to use £0.9 revenue reserves to fund some of the spending plans for the next financial year.

5.3.3 The current savings programme which has been ongoing within WY Police since July 2020. Over £9m savings been made, more have been identified but these would have a very significant operational impact and include the loss of staff and officers.

5.4 The PCC reported on the operational context, reporting that:

5.4.1 Overall demand continues to rise and is predicted to continue to increase, with demand in complex and costly areas of crime increasing (CSE and abuse,

safeguarding, mental health and human trafficking). There is still the unknown factor of a possible increase in unreported CSEA and DA as a result of Covid which may still come to light.

5.4.2 The PCC reported on the key areas which require investment include Neighbourhood Policing Teams, Digital Forensics and Critical Communications Infrastructure.

5.5 The Panel asked the Commissioner a series of questions which related to his precept proposal, the budget assumptions which underpinned it and his future financial plans.

5.5.1 Panel questioned the PCC and Chief Constable to get an understanding of the operational impact of not getting the proposed £15 increase. The Chief Constable reported that it would mean approximately 100 less PCSOs, less digital investigation capability meaning would fall even further behind on and less Police staff investigators in safeguarding and DA and safeguarding.

5.5.2 Panel suggested there was a lack of evidence in the report that the PCC had considered the impact of an increase on the public in the current economic climate resulting from the pandemic. The PCC stressed that this had been a major consideration but on balance he felt that it was a necessary difficult decision to maintain and rebuild operational resilience for the public in West Yorkshire.

5.5.3 There was discussion about if an alternative lower increase had been considered and why the implications of this had not been shared. Panel questioned the legitimacy of, and sought further clarification as to why, the option of a lower increase had not been included in the public consultation.

5.5.4 The Panel sought reassurance on the use of reserves and the viability of the current reserves position. The PCC confirmed that the reported Financial officer view is that the reserve level is adequate but on the low side. These are in line with the other metropolitan forces. It was noted that he is making the case to Government for 'levelling up' funding and in particular further capital allocations.

5.5.5 There was discussion about the importance of neighbourhood policing and the impact of a reduction of partner funded PCSO posts. The PCC reiterated his commitment to neighbourhood policing and building back the numbers of PCSO officers. Panel stressed the importance of having a neighbourhood policing team who are representative of the communities they serve.

6. Panel Response to Precept Proposal

6.1 RESOLVED

Following discussion with the Commissioner, a majority of Panel members voted to support the proposal to increase the precept by 7.64% which equates to £15 on the council tax for a Band D property for 2021/22 on the basis that the PCC would:

- 6.1.1 Continue to prioritise increased investment into neighbourhood policing building back the non-partner funded PCSO numbers to establishment of 566.
- 6.1.2 That all new recruitment seeks to increase the number of people from BAME and other under-represented groups to ensure that the Force is representative of the communities in West Yorkshire.
- 6.1.3 That the PCC provides ongoing assurance about the resilience of the reserves position going forward and that where possible additional savings are considered towards building up future reserves.
- 6.1.4 That there is a commitment to early discussion with the Panel about any public budget consultation to ensure that the outcomes are clear and robust.

7. Commissioner's response to any current issues

- 7.1 The PCC reported that following the completion of the Devolution Bill for West Yorkshire, the formal consultation for the TUPE of OPCC staff to transfer across to the Mayoral Combined Authority will now commence.
- 7.2 The PCC extended his thanks to officers of West Yorkshire Police and the Chief Constable for the latest positive crime statistics published this week which showed good reduction in a number of crime areas continuing the downward trend that commenced pre-pandemic. Thanks were also expressed for all the work the Police have been doing and continue to do during the Covid period.

8. Published Key Decisions

- 8.1 The published Key Decisions were noted.

9. Agreed Actions Log

- 9.1 The agreed actions log was noted and approved by the Panel.

10. Forward Agenda Plan

10.1 The forward agenda plan was noted. It was agreed that the PCC would provide an interim update on the PCC transition to the March meeting.

11. Complaints Update

11.1 The Panel received a report containing an update of complaints ongoing, noting that there are currently no open recorded complaints.

12. Any Other Business

12.1 No other business was raised.

13. Date and Time of Next Meeting

13.1 The next meeting of the Panel will take place on 19th March 2021 and will be held via video conference.