



**West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel**

**Draft Minutes**

**10<sup>th</sup> March 2023, via MS Teams**

- PRESENT:**
- |                                 |                      |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| Councillor Al Garthwaite        | - Leeds City Council |
| Councillor Amanda Carter        | - Leeds City Council |
| Councillor Nicole Sharpe        | - Leeds City Council |
| Councillor Paul Sullivan        | - Bradford Council   |
| Councillor Sarfraz Nazir        | - Bradford Council   |
| Councillor Ann Kingstone        | - Calderdale Council |
| Councillor Robert Thornber      | - Calderdale Council |
| Councillor Mohan Sokhal         | - Kirklees Council   |
| Councillor Anthony Smith        | - Kirklees Council   |
| Councillor Andrew Cooper        | - Kirklees Council   |
| Councillor Usman Ali            | - Wakefield Council  |
| Councillor Maureen Tennant-King | - Wakefield Council  |
| Mrs Joanne Sykes                | - Independent        |
| Mr Trevor Lake                  | - Independent        |

**In attendance**

- |                    |                                       |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Tracy Brabin       | - Mayor of West Yorkshire             |
| Alison Lowe        | - Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime |
| Liz Hunter         | - West Yorkshire Combined Authority   |
| Julie Reid         | - West Yorkshire Combined Authority   |
| Wendy Stevens      | - West Yorkshire Combined Authority   |
| Melissa Liburd     | - West Yorkshire Combined Authority   |
| Neil Hudson        | - West Yorkshire Combined Authority   |
| Sunny Williams     | - West Yorkshire Combined Authority   |
| Iain Yates         | - West Yorkshire Combined Authority   |
| John Robins        | - West Yorkshire Police               |
| Daniel Ware        | - West Yorkshire Police               |
| Sharon Fraser      | - Wakefield Council                   |
| Samantha Wilkinson | - Wakefield Council                   |
| Fiona Bernardo     | - Wakefield Council                   |

The meeting was moved to Microsoft Teams due to the severe weather warnings. The meeting was live-streamed to the public via YouTube.

**1. Acceptance of apologies for absence**

3.1 Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Sarfraz Nazir, Robert Thornber, Andrew Cooper and Sinead Engel.

**2. To approve, as a correct record and deal with any matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of the Police and Crime Panel held on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2023.**

2.1. The minutes were agreed as a correct record.

2.2 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

**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 that there were no urgent items to add to the agenda.

**4. Members' Declaration of Interests**

4.1 There were no declarations of interest.

**5. Performance Monitoring Report – Q3**

5.1 The Mayor introduced her report, which covers Quarter 3, 2022. She highlighted the introduction of national and MSF (Most Similar Forces) comparisons where possible, in response to a previous request from Panel to see these included in the figures. It has not been possible to compare satisfaction survey results across forces as there is no comparable data; however, the Home Office is currently tendering for a provider to undertake a national survey, which will enable these comparisons to be made.

5.2 The Mayor drew attention to the excellent call handling results achieved by West Yorkshire Police (WYP). Despite an increase in demand and complexity of calls, the data shows that 999 call handling times continue to be excellent with the average call answered in 7 seconds, against a national target of 10 seconds. She also acknowledged the continuing decline in victim satisfaction; this was discussed at the latest performance scrutiny meeting with the Chief Constable. She is aware of the work that is going on within WYP to tackle this, despite the ongoing influence of negative national stories in the press.

5.3 The Mayor referred to the homicide rate and to the recent high profile events in West Yorkshire, highlighting that WYP rank mid-table on this, when compared to other most

similar forces (MSFs). She drew attention to the participation of WYP in a recent thematic report on homicides undertaken by HMICFRS.

- 5.4 At 3.4.2, the Mayor referred to the latest anti-social behaviour (ASB) statistics, commenting that work was ongoing to understand the complicated picture of different crime types. She also highlighted the great progress made around recruitment of ethnic minority officers into the Force, although further progress needs to be made for police staff. The report shows the current picture with regards to missing persons, liaison and diversion work, and the continued focus on early intervention and prevention.
- 5.5 Finally, the Mayor wanted to highlight the continued influence of the Police and Crime Plan on Force priorities, and how she and the Deputy Mayor use every opportunity they can to highlight the linkages.
- 5.5 A question was asked about the strategies WYP are using to deter knife crime, as although incidents are reducing, there have been high profile incidents in West Yorkshire and Panel felt that people are still very fearful of this type of crime.
- 5.6 Panel were assured by the Chief Constable that the VRU and Operation Jemlock were the primary means by which the Force tackles knife crime, taking a holistic partnership approach, working with other agencies, local authorities and communities to tackle this.
- 5.7 Panel sought further assurances that the Mayor was confident that the Force had a strategy for dealing with the increase in homicide numbers, and requested a further breakdown of the statistics. The Mayor agreed that this could be included in the next report to Panel, and it was highlighted that whenever the Met see an increase in homicide rates, the same trend seems to move north. The Deputy Mayor commented that the homicide and knife crime strategies are closely linked, with often only a few inches difference between a knife attack becoming a homicide. For greater transparency of numbers, the Mayor has asked for domestic homicides to be separated out in the performance statistics.
- 5.8 A question was asked regarding the upcoming national survey on the subject of satisfaction with the police, specifically, when Panel would have the chance to see the survey outcomes and comparisons. The Deputy Mayor replied that the government were only at the very early stages with the survey, and it was likely to be autumn at the earliest before any feedback is ready. She committed to sharing the results with Panel as soon as they were available.
- 5.9 A further question was asked of the Mayor, around what particular strategy or action she thinks has driven the positive results in prosecutions and outcomes for sexual offences. The Mayor replied that it has been a great example of partnership working between WYP (who invest significant resource into this area) and other agencies. In addition, the excellent application of Operation Soteria Bluestone (a partnership of policing and leading academics brought about to significantly improve the outcomes for victims of rape and sexual offending), a Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO)

gate keeper at Detective Chief Inspector level and a dedicated Detective Inspector, and a Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) champion at Superintendent level have all made a significant difference in this area. The Chief Constable added that WYP are recording crimes properly, focussing on the perpetrators, and building a forensic and safeguarding-centred approach. He added that there were now more trained front line officers to liaise with victims and gain their trust in the first critical minutes of the reporting process. The Mayor also highlighted the role of Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA) and Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA) in supporting victims.

- 5.10 Panel requested an update from the Mayor about upstream delays in the criminal justice system, and whether effective measures were being taken to support victims through the delays. Reassurances were given that the Mayor's office works with the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) to facilitate support, for example greater use of currently underutilised video evidence and live link technology. A wide reaching review of the way that the LCJB work is underway, and a full day of planning has been arranged in April to review and re-focus how best to meet the needs of victims and witnesses, including the use of 'special measures' which can be used in the early stages of a court case to help victims and witnesses through the process of giving evidence.
- 5.11 The Deputy Mayor was asked how confident she was that these 'special measures' will be enough to support changes required to the process. She replied that she believed that they will help, as long as decisions to use the measures were made by the courts very early in the process, as delays increase the risk that the victims will withdraw from the process. Both the Chief Constable and the Deputy Mayor stressed that the commitment to make necessary procedural changes is clear amongst local partners, however, they are often bound by rules and procedures set at a national level which cannot be circumvented locally. They reaffirmed their own commitment to apply pressure for change nationally in these areas.
- 5.12 Mention was made of a recent article in The Guardian newspaper, co-authored by WYP Chief Constable John Robins and the Chief Constables of the West Midlands and Greater Manchester Forces regarding changes they believe are needed to the system of charging domestic abuse and hate crime incidents, in order to get the best possible outcomes for victims. Panel asked if he had been contacted by anyone at a national level about the article, and he confirmed that he had not.
- 5.13 Regarding the high incidence of repeat domestic abuse offences, the Mayor was asked if she was confident that current work with perpetrators is effective. She replied that she believed the Cautioning and Relationship Abuse (CARA) service is a significant tool in the efforts to reduce repeat incidents of domestic abuse. A national independent evaluation of the scheme has concluded that outcomes from the scheme are good. This scheme is run alongside educational materials in schools around healthy relationships.
- 5.14 A further question was asked around the recording of domestic abuse incidents, and the difficulty of proving the effectiveness of early intervention was discussed. The process of recording domestic abuse incidents was explained, and it was stressed that

the requirement for officers at the scene to undertake a formal risk assessment is critical in information gathering, informing, as it does, the basis of subsequent multi agency meetings.

- 5.15 The Mayor was asked when the results of the HMICFRS thematic report on homicides which WYP had taken part in will be published. The Mayor committed to sharing the evaluation report, which is available now.
- 5.16 Panel sought further clarification on the recruitment of under represented ethnic groups. The Mayor was asked why the representation was increasing positively amongst Asian minorities and women, but the Force still seemed to be struggling with Black minorities. The Deputy Mayor assured Panel that every effort was being made to reach these communities, including new training provision within the College of Policing and a specific strategy within the Police Race Action Plan, however she acknowledged that the issue stemmed from a historic distrust of the police, and this could take a number of years to overcome.
- 5.17 A question was asked at 4.4.2 in the report about the cause of the increasing trend in first time adult offenders, and what the Mayor was doing to ensure that this is addressed. Panel were reassured that some of the increase in figures was down to a 12 month lag, as this is the time period that has to pass to monitor any re-offending. The figures are therefore more reflective of the lockdown period when WYP saw increased activity around adult offenders, particularly related to drug offences. The Mayor added that much work is undertaken to prevent people with drug addictions entering the criminal justice system. She believes that the cost of living crisis has had an impact on crimes such as shoplifting, which could also be affecting the figures.

**5.18 RESOLVED**

**5.18.1** The HMICFRS evaluation report to be shared with Panel members.

**6. Supporting Victims and Witnesses**

- 6.1 The Mayor presented her report which covered a wide range of issues impacting on victims and witnesses.
- 6.2 A question was asked at 6.3 in the Mayor's report, about revisions to the MG2 (Special Measures) form, and what difference that would make to the process. The Deputy Mayor responded that the revisions will mean that the form can be completed earlier, and with experience showing that the earlier a form is completed and submitted, the better chance it has of being approved by the court, she hoped that the revisions would contribute to a more positive experience for victims and witnesses. She added that there is now a whole partnership approach to this process, and a committee has been convened to address this, and many other issues which impact adversely on victims and witnesses. The Mayor added that she had seen first-hand how this process

can work at the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in Leeds giving the victim the chance to give their evidence early and move forward with their life.

6.3 A question was asked about the provision referred to in Appendix 3, for a cost of living payment to service providers. The Mayor was asked if she would be checking in with providers to make sure that the provision made for increased operating costs was enough, and that contractual obligations would not be compromised by financial hardship. The Deputy Mayor acknowledged that many contractors were struggling, but that there had been no material changes to service delivery, mainly due to the uplift in funding secured and the goodwill of staff.

6.4 Panel requested sight of the delivery plan for the Victims and Witnesses Strategy, and were assured that this would be brought to Panel after the final version is published.

## **6.5 RESOLVED**

**6.5.1** Panel noted the report.

## **7. Mayors Response to Current Issues**

7.1 After a series of high profile murders in West Yorkshire recently, the Mayor wished to acknowledge the work that the police are doing to bring the perpetrators to justice and to express her condolences to the families and communities affected. Knife crime continues to be a high policing priority for her; she believes that the work of the VRU and Operation Jemlock are making a real difference in this area, complemented by the Community Safety Fund, which helps grassroots community organisations play their part in driving improvements at a local level.

7.2 The Mayor drew Panel's attention to a recent successful drugs raid by WYP, as reported on 9 March, an intervention which she believes protected a number of young people from involvement in county lines activity.

7.3 The Mayor highlighted the work of the Road Safety Partnership Board and its potential to positively impact on the longstanding issue of road safety cameras. Two newly appointed colleagues were present at the meeting, and would be bringing a report on progress to Panel in April.

7.4 The Mayor highlighted the recent 'Speak Up Leeds' campaign which centres around positive influences on young black boys. A video would be circulated, and Panel members were encouraged to watch it.

7.5 The Deputy Mayor was reminded of a discussion within Panel some time ago around allowing local authorities to have more power over traffic enforcement to support the work done by WYP in this area, and asked if any progress had been made with this idea. The Deputy Mayor replied that the new West Yorkshire Camera Safety Partnership has its own strategy now, and this does give local authorities and communities more influence over where mobile speed cameras are stationed, and the partnership have been able to purchase four new vans. She added that there was now more flexibility to decide on camera locations, whereas this had previously been subject to rigid requirements based around numbers of accidents and fatalities. The Deputy Mayor also referred to Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO) which local authorities can now seek in conjunction with WYP, to address anti-social behaviour on the roads. Panel welcomed this progress and asked if any thought had been given to more low-tech, less costly deterrents such as posters or images to display at speed hot-spots. The Deputy Mayor said that she would welcome any innovative ideas.

7.6 The Deputy Mayor was asked if she could provide a breakdown by district of the recent grant money given to local authorities to deal with anti-social car crime. She agreed to provide the information.

#### **7.7 RESOLVED**

**7.7.1** A video supporting the ‘Speak Up Leeds’ campaign to be circulated to Panel members.

**7.7.2** A breakdown of grant money per district to tackle anti-social car crime to be circulated.

#### **8. Published Key Decisions**

8.1 The published key decisions were noted.

#### **9. Agreed Actions Log**

9.1 The Agreed Actions log was noted.

#### **10. Forward Agenda Plan**

10.1 The Forward Agenda Plan was noted.

10.2 To accompany the item on road safety planned for the April meeting, the Mayor was asked to provide within it, detailed figures and a realistic trajectory of how she sees

serious road traffic accident numbers declining under the new road safety partnership strategy.

**11. Complaints Received by the Panel**

11.1 The Panel noted that there are no new recorded complaints against the Mayor or Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime.

**12. Any Other Business**

12.1 The Chief Constable commented that he was aware that there may be some negative reporting around the police coming in the national press. He asked Panel members to reflect on the challenges of the last few years, and whilst not ignoring mistakes that may have been made, to take a whole view of policing, including all the exceptional work that officers do on a daily basis.

12.2 Based on anecdotal evidence, a question was asked about drop out rates due to high pressure workloads for candidates on the police apprenticeship degree at Leeds Trinity University. The Deputy Mayor assured Panel that she meets with the degree providers regularly, and this has not been raised as an issue with her. She asked for any anecdotal evidence to be sent to her directly and that she would raise it with the University.

**13. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

13.1 The next meeting of the Police and Crime Panel will be held at 10.00am on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2023, in the Old Court Room, Wakefield Town Hall.