



West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel

Draft Minutes

17th December 2021, Council Chamber, County Hall, Wakefield

PRESENT:	Councillor Mohammed Iqbal	- Leeds City Council (Chair)
	Councillor Paul Sullivan	- Bradford Council
	Councillor Sarah Courtney	- Calderdale Council
	Councillor Sophie Whittaker	- Calderdale Council
	Councillor Mark Thompson	- Kirklees Council
	Councillor Amanda Carter	- Leeds City Council
	Councillor Nicole Sharpe	- Leeds City Council
	Councillor Maureen Tennant-King	- Wakefield Council
	Mrs Jo Sykes	- Independent
	Mr Trevor Lake	- Independent
	In attendance	
	Tracy Brabin	- Mayor of West Yorkshire
	Alison Lowe	- Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime
	Erica Doran	- West Yorkshire Combined Authority
	Alan Reiss	- West Yorkshire Combined Authority
	Wendy Stevens	- West Yorkshire Combined Authority
	John Robins QPM	- Chief Constable, West Yorkshire Police
	Sharon Fraser	- Wakefield Council
	Samantha Wilkinson	- Wakefield Council
	Fiona Bernardo	- Wakefield Council

1. Acceptance of apologies for absence

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jacqui Williams, Cahal Burke, Richard Dunbar, Tariq Hussain, and Masood Ahmed.

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 12th November 2021.

- 2.1 The minutes were agreed as a correct record. Cllr Paul Sullivan referenced a request from the meeting of 12th November from the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime (DMPC) to provide evidence of the numbers of people convicted in stop and searches broken down by ethnicity. He told the meeting that he had the evidence, and that he would forward it on to the DMPC. The DMPC said she would welcome sight of the figures.

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 Trevor Lake declared an interest in item 6, as a member of the Joint Internal Audit Committee.

5. Summary of HMICFRS West Yorkshire Police PEEL Inspection Report 202122

5.1 The Mayor introduced her report, which summarised the findings of the latest PEEL inspection report into the operation of West Yorkshire Police (WYP) and was published on the 24th November under a new, more expansive methodology. The new methodology expands the three previous areas of assessment to 10, providing greater transparency. Performance is now graded across the five headings of Outstanding, Good, Adequate, Requires Improvement, and Inadequate.

5.2 The 2021 report awarded WYP with 4 'Outstanding' grades (preventing crime, treatment of the public, disrupting serious and organised crime and good use of resources), four 'Good' grades, and two 'Adequate' grades, representing substantial improvement on the previous report. Six areas for improvement were identified in the report, and WYP will act on those recommendations.

5.3 Panel unanimously congratulated WYP on the report findings, and paid tribute to the work of all officers and staff in achieving these high standards in such challenging times.

5.4 The Mayor and DMPC added their congratulations and also paid tribute to officers who had recently won bravery awards. The Mayor added that she and the DMPC will continue to work with WYP to hold the Chief Constable to account over the identified 'areas for improvement' and will share with Panel her response to HMICFRS which will acknowledge these areas and outline plans to improve performance further. In addition, the Mayor shared her belief that the report will help WYP in recruiting and retaining quality staff and officers.

5.5 The Chief Constable thanked Panel, the Mayor and the DMPC for their words, and made clear that he would be resolute in addressing the areas identified as needing improvement, working as he is within current pressures and the financial situation.

5.6 RESOLVED

5.6.1 Panel noted the report, congratulated WYP on their achievements, and acknowledged the identified areas for improvement.

6. Mid-term Financial Forecast

- 6.1 The Mayor introduced this report, which updated Panel members on the force position against the 2021/22 budget, and current planning for the Mid Term Financial Forecast. The report also gives a summary of matters that are likely to impact on police funding in West Yorkshire.
- 6.2 At the time the report was written, the Home Office settlement for the coming year had not been released, however, the Mayor reported that since then, it had been, and that the DMPC would talk through the main areas of interest.
- 6.3 Prior to the settlement announcement, the Mayor reported that WYP were on track to balance the books for the year 2021/22. Any additional costs, such as overtime had been mitigated by capital cost savings on energy, for example. The Mayor also made it clear that her and the team were constantly lobbying to influence the funding formula in West Yorkshire's favour, a key component to the budgetary considerations.
- 6.4 The DMPC summarised the funding settlement implications for West Yorkshire. Overall, the grant increased by £21.4m, however, taking out monies needed for the (much welcomed) pay increase for police officers of 3.5%, inflation and the NI uplift which comes into effect in April 2022, the settlement reduces to £7.9m, from which recruitment costs must also be taken. She stressed that despite this, the additional money is very welcome and the settlement amount was more positive than had been expected. She was keen to convey that significant financial challenges remained however.
- 6.5 The Mayor wanted to make clear her belief that to enable crime reduction programmes to run effectively, and having decided not to levy a Mayor's precept, it was critical that raising a £10 local precept would be essential to provide the level of service required to keep the people of West Yorkshire safe.
- 6.6 A request was made by the Panel to see the revised financial forecast as soon as possible, in the light of the settlement information. Detail was requested to enable clarity on any recruitment challenges which may occur as a result of the settlement. With regard to the precept increase, it was noted that £10 would be an increase in excess of 4% for families who are facing increased upward pressures on all bills in the current climate.
- 6.7 The Mayor acknowledged the issue of financial pressure for families, but still felt that it was a necessary cost to ensure the safety of the people of West Yorkshire.

6.8 RESOLVED

- 6.8.1 Panel welcomed the report and will await further detail and an updated financial forecast.

7. Delivery Quarterly Performance Report – Q2

- 7.1 The Mayor introduced the latest quarterly performance statistics. After a request from the Panel in a previous meeting, the report now includes commentary after each section of the report which shows actions that the Mayor's office are taking in

response to issues raised in the report. This is in addition to the commentary provided by WYP to detail their own actions.

7.2 The Mayor wished to highlight the following elements from the report:

- Work has taken place to improve confidence in and satisfaction with WYP, and the importance of involving all stakeholders in this work was highlighted.
- There has been a focus on stalking, in line with the Mayoral pledge to keep women and girls safe, for example, more efficient use of stalking orders.
- Despite a recorded increase in knife crime, thanks to the interventions of Operation Jemlock, rates are still low in West Yorkshire in comparison to other forces.
- Regarding neighbourhood crime, 90% of police officers were retained on the front line.
- Serious violent crime and outcomes for domestic abuse continue to be high on the agenda this quarter, and meetings have taken place with partners in the criminal justice system to try to address this.
- High numbers of referrals have been seen in liaison and diversion, and numbers of repeat victims for domestic abuse crime is no longer rising, which is positive and aligns with one of the Mayor's stated focuses of early intervention work.

7.3 Panel discussed the paper and made a number of observations. It was noted that domestic violence remains high in West Yorkshire, although it's unclear from statistics if the reason for that is because reporting is higher, or if the problem is worse here. During the pandemic, issues with anger and mental health have been prevalent. A Panel member reported a number of males alleging false accusations, and also that anecdotal evidence from women shows that many don't feel supported by agencies involved (despite the police taking claims seriously). The Mayor was positive that women were feeling more confident to report these crimes, and that she would try to differentiate the two issues. She did acknowledge a rise in anger through the pandemic which she agreed did need to be addressed. The DMPC highlighted the challenge of working with the CPS, whose policy means that many victims withdraw during the process. She highlighted the recent announcement that the police now record misandry as well as misogyny alongside crimes, and will always utilise all evidence before making a decision to charge. She also stated that West Yorkshire now has five safeguarding hubs, underpinned by effective partnerships and recognised by OFSTED as such, so she believed that arrangements were securely in place.

7.4 A question was asked about engagement work. Whilst acknowledging the benefit of increased confidence and satisfaction in the police, methods of engagement (specifically a door-to-door exercise conducted in Wakefield recently) have sometimes felt to be undertaken at the expense of other areas of local policing. The Mayor and DMPC acknowledged that the benefits of this exercise could have been communicated better locally, but that the exercise did result in an additional 3,500 people signing up to receive community alerts, which resulted in a substantial increase in positive interaction with the public.

7.5 The improvement in statistics for missing persons was acknowledged, and the Mayor was asked if she thought that the improvements were as a result of the police

approaching this differently, or whether previous plans were now bearing fruit. The DMPC replied that she believed it was a result of the huge amount of work being undertaken between safeguarding hubs and the police which was now bearing dividends. Local authorities are working hard to get better outcomes in this area and the police are performing well in their cross boundary work.

7.6 An update was requested on progress with speeding work. The Mayor replied that the DMPC was leading from the front, and presented a proposal to the leaders of all five West Yorkshire councils to establish a Vision Zero board on theirs, and the Mayor;s behalf. The first meeting of this group has happened, attended by many senior officers from local authorities, public health, and organisations such as Metro and Brake. Work is underway to establish a strategic direction and plans are to include people with ‘lived experience’ in the meetings.

7.7 Concerns were raised that figures in the report which seem to show a reduction in child sexual exploitation cases would give a false sense of satisfaction in this area. Reassurances were sought that work and resources would not decrease in this area, and that this should not be picked up as a ‘good news’ story. The Mayor acknowledged this point and gave assurances that she would look into it.

7.8 Reassurance was sought that male victims of violence would not be given a lower priority, due to the Mayor’s focus on violence against women and girls. The Mayor assured Panel that all victims of violent crime were fully supported, and that her pledge would not result in an ‘either or’ situation, rather in the adoption of a public health approach to the issue, and to supporting those who have felt unable to report crimes in the past. She stated that everyone should have the confidence to report these crimes.

7.9 RESOLVED

7.9.1 Panel noted the report.

8. Development of the West Yorkshire Police and Crime 2021 - 2024

8.1 Panel heard from the Mayor and DMPC regarding the progress of the Police and Crime Plan, a draft of which was due to come to the meeting, but which has been delayed. The Mayor and DMPC explained to Panel that the delay was a result of the scale of the consultation that had been undertaken, which they believed to be wider and more inclusive than any previous consultations and included over 1,000 face to face meetings, over 40 partnership responses, translations into many languages and into easy format options. There had been more diverse ways of responding to the consultation than ever before and the scale of collating the information and ensuring that all views were recorded had been significant and caused the delay.

- 8.2 A presentation was shared with the Panel, showing the scale and outcomes of the consultation, and how priorities had been honed since the consultation in the areas of support for victims and witnesses and criminal justice outcomes, for example.
- 8.3 The presentation showed how the plan will focus on three main themes, and show the detailed enablers which will help deliver it. A full needs assessment has been written to inform the plan, and this information will sit alongside the consultation document to inform the Plan. Information has been split into objectives and outcomes, with four key priorities now identified in the plan as follows:
- Supporting victims and witnesses
 - Keeping people safe and building resilience
 - Safer places and thriving communities
 - Responding to multiple and complex needs
- 8.4 Panel heard that the ‘golden thread’ of keeping women and girls safe runs through all priorities and objectives, and that a draft performance framework is being pulled together to ensure the document is fit for purpose and dovetails with national government initiatives. Panel heard that staff in the Mayor’s office would be happy to run a performance framework session with members if they felt it would be useful.
- 8.5 In response to the presentation, Panel asked the Mayor to consider re-dating the Plan as 2022-24, due to the fact that it would not be operational in 2021. The Mayor was also asked to clarify the stated plans to recruit additional staff and officers and how this will be achieved.
- 8.6 Panel congratulated the Mayor on the outstanding nature of the consultation, however, the response rate of 2,500 responses in relation to the population of West Yorkshire as a whole was noted as not particularly high. The Mayor commented that although she would, of course, have liked a higher level of response, she had been very pleased with the numbers and especially the diversity of response. She stressed that huge efforts had been made to reach out to all sections of the population for the consultation, both in person and online.
- 8.7 Regarding the fact that WYP are now recording misogyny and misandry, some Panel members voiced discomfort about recording crimes based on feelings rather than facts, and that this could be prone to inaccuracies and opinion. The Mayor was asked how those potential issues would be combatted in the plan. The Mayor responded that she believed it very important to record if someone feels they have been attacked for a specific characteristic, be that gender or any other reason. She believed that collecting this information helped to build a picture of a person, or an area, to identify potential clusters and to enable better cross-partnership working. She stressed that it

was not something that would necessarily go to court on its own, but would enable a better understanding of certain crimes.

- 8.8 The DMPC concurred with the Mayor's view and stressed that lived experience needs to be acknowledged in recording crimes. She talked through how the Plan will be overarching, and informed by people's experiences and feelings, alongside data and evidence (provided by the Needs Assessment)
- 8.9 Panel asked for clarification regarding how the Police and Crime Plan will tie in with other Mayoral responsibilities such as housing and transport. The Mayor assured Panel that her other responsibilities will dovetail with or cross over the Plan, for example, transport and the safety of passengers are intrinsically linked, as work to preventing re-offending is with housing, skills and employment.
- 8.10 A question was asked regarding how violent crime, and in particular causes of violent crime, would be tackled in the Police and Crime Plan. Reference was made to the influence of addictions and mental health conditions on these crimes, and the need for increased health interventions to prevent tying up front line police officers time.
- 8.11 The Mayor responded that she understood that the police do pick up a lot of these issues on call outs to violent crime, and she acknowledged that views from the consultation had echoed that. She told Panel that addiction is often impacted by poverty or trauma, and that she was working with partners in the third sector and health professionals to try to address this. Panel heard that WYP do have specialist mental health officers that support relevant incidents and can triage phone calls.
- 8.12 The Chief Constable added that WYP do have mental health specialists and triage teams in dispatch centres to give information and advice. He agreed that the police do pick up a lot of this work, and regularly deal with mental health issues, which are a regular factor in the areas of domestic abuse and missing persons.
- 8.13 Panel asked the Mayor if she could use this evidence to show agencies that they must work together to tackle these issues. The Mayor agreed to do this, and assured Panel that she did work as a bridge between services, and even in the areas where she has no formal powers (for example, in healthcare), she would use her 'soft' powers to persuade and bring together agencies to address these issues.
- 8.14 A question was asked as to whether digital safety and online bullying would be part of the focus on the safety of women and girls. The Mayor responded that yes, it would be within the focus of that priority. In addition, statutory protection in the form of the Online Harm bill going through Parliament at the moment, would support this work, and the continuing pressure on platforms to remind them that they are publishers of information, and have a duty of care with respect to these issues. The Mayor

reassured Panel that WYP have a large digital workforce, as part of the cyber and online crime sections, which covers these issues, and linkages to it will be covered in the plan.

- 8.15 The Chair asked the Mayor to confirm timescales for the Police and Crime Plan to be shared with Panel. The Mayor apologised for the date slippage, which she reminded Panel, was due to the volume of work generated by the consultation. She guaranteed that the Plan would be before Panel at the next meeting on 21st January.

8.16 RESOLVED

8.16.1 Panel noted the report and the reasons for the delay in bringing the Police and Crime Plan to Panel.

9. Mayor's Response to any current issues

- 9.1 The Mayor shared with the Panel that West Yorkshire Police is now a White Ribbon Ambassador organisation, and that following on from the publication of the Police Chiefs Council's national strategy on supporting women and girls, West Yorkshire Police now have published their own strategy on this issue, and have complemented it with a film on social media, shares of which would be greatly appreciated.
- 9.2 The Chief Constable wanted to highlight that West Yorkshire Police had recently been named as the 25th most inclusive employer in the UK.

10. Published Key Decisions

- 10.1 Panel noted the Published Key Decisions

11. Agreed Actions Log

- 11.1 The Agreed Actions Log was noted.

12. Forward Agenda Plan

- 12.1 The Forward Agenda Plan was noted. There will be two sessions in January, a public session to discuss the Police and Crime Plan, followed by a private session.
- 12.2 Further assurances were sought that the Police and Crime Plan would be ready for, and circulated electronically in advance of the meeting on 21st January. Assurances for both were given by the Mayor.

13. Complaints received by the Panel

13.1 The Panel noted that there are no new recorded or existing ongoing complaints.

14. Any Other Business

14.1 There was no other business.

15. Date and Time of Next Meeting

15.1 The next meeting of the Police and Crime Panel will be held at 10.00am on Friday, 21st January 2022 in the Old Restaurant, Wakefield Town Hall.