

Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel
17 July 2020
Feedback Report

The role of the Panel is to: *“maintain a regular check and balance on the performance of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). The functions of the Panel are to be exercised with a view to supporting the effective exercise of the functions of the PCC. The Panel is under a duty to support, as well as challenge, the PCC.”*

At the July meeting the Panel considered a number of matters:

1. Election of Chair

Cllr Collin Hay was elected as Chair for 2020/21

2. Election of Vice Chairperson

Cllr Steve Robinson was elected Vice-Chair for 2020/21

3. COVID-19: Lesson learned and policing “new normal”

The response of the PCC and the Police to the pandemic was discussed.

The PCC noted that he had ensured that the Chief Constable “had had the space needed” to get on with operational matters and confirmed that he had released an additional £1m of funding from reserves to ensure that funding restrictions did not impact the ability of the Police to respond effectively.

The Chief Constable stated that, from the outset of the pandemic, the Police approach had been one of “education and engaging with the public, with enforcement as a last resort”. A bespoke command structure had been put in place early in the pandemic to ensure smooth operations.

40/50 Police Officers had initially displayed symptoms of COVID-19 and had self-isolated, but this number had dropped significantly over time. Special Constables had been extensively used; this had been facilitated by a number being furloughed by their normal employer.

Overall, crime dropped during the pandemic, with both burglary and shoplifting falling for obvious reasons, but domestic abuse incidents had risen slightly. The amount of county lines crimes had also fallen.

The PCC acknowledged that the 101 system was still struggling with both the number and complexity of calls being in excess of that originally envisaged. There was still a need for better connectivity with other agencies relevant to the calls received. The performance of the system was under review.

Central government has confirmed that the cost of PPE to the police will be reimbursed.

4. Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) – Chief Executive Report

Richard Bradley, the CEO OPCC gave a detailed report.

The need for a new court complex in Gloucestershire was discussed. This is not within the remit of the PCC, but he had been active in pursuing the topic with local Gloucestershire MPs as he feels that the current antiquated arrangements are not fit for purpose and is concerned that cases may have to be heard outside the county. The Panel resolved to write to the MPs requesting their support in maintaining a Gloucestershire-based court system.

The Panel asked that thanks be passed on to all the Police staff and volunteers for their commitment and dedication to keeping residents safe during the pandemic.

The Panel agreed to support the Black Lives Matter Statement agreed by Leadership Gloucestershire.

5. O PCC - Draft Annual Report

The draft annual report of the activities of the PCC was considered. The Panel noted that the current year report was an improvement on the previous year's report.

Amongst various matters highlighted in the report, the Panel was particularly impressed by the scheme of parking buddies - cones the size of small children dressed as Police Officers - installed at some Gloucestershire schools to help ensure appropriate traffic management.

6. OPCC Appointment of CEO

The Panel supported the appointment of the acting OPCC CEO, Richard Bradley, to the permanent role.

The next meeting of the Panel will be on 18 September 2020.