

LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – 25 July 2018

PCC'S ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

At its meeting on Wednesday 25 July, the Police and Crime Panel considered the Police and Crime Commissioner's draft Annual Report 2017/18. The comments of the Panel in response to the report are summarised below:

The Panel thanks the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for a full and detailed report. It is evident that the PCC has carried out a broad spectrum of work both in his role of holding the Force to account and in his role commissioning services to tackle crime related issues.

In the Annual Report the PCC refers briefly to his better funding settlement campaign and consequently the Panel asked for further details as to the actions the PCC has carried out as part of this campaign. The Panel has been informed that the campaign included responding to the Police Funding Formula consultation, issuing press releases, and holding meetings with MPs. The PCC may wish to include these further details in his Annual Report.

At the Panel meeting on 25 July the Panel sought clarification on the statement in the Annual Report as part of The Year in a Nutshell section, regarding calling for a new law to quash the criminal convictions of sexual abuse victims. It was explained by the PCC that this referred to young people forwarding images to each other via electronic means, and the question of whether they should be prosecuted for these offences at such a young age. The Panel thanks the PCC for this clarification but is of the view that the Annual Report should provide greater explanation of the issue.

With regard to financial pressures the Panel notes that the PCC places a strong emphasis on partnerships and collaboration to improve efficiency and the Panel endorses this approach. The Panel has concerns regarding crime detection rates though is reassured that the PCC and Leicestershire Police share these concerns. The Panel is interested to note the challenges the Force faces around crime detection such as the strict crime recording rules set by the Home Office, the volume, demand and complexity of the crimes, and the decreasing tendency of offenders to admit multiple offences when apprehended. The Panel accepts that Out of Court Disposals may be the most appropriate way to deal with some offences and offenders, however is concerned that this approach gives a misleading impression of detection rates given that Out of Court Disposals are not included in detection figures.

The Panel notes that overall crime has been on the rise both nationally and within Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland and that in the Annual Report the PCC attributes the rise for some crime types such as violent crime and sexual offences to increased confidence on the part of the public to report offences. However, incongruously to this statement, at the Panel meeting itself it was stated that it was believed that rape and domestic violence were areas where there were real crime

increases. There is clearly a lack of clarity in this area. The Panel has for some time queried how much of increased crime recording is actually due to greater reporting by the public and how it can be ascertained what are the true crime figures. The Panel is aware that there is a view that some crime types such as Hate Crime are underreported. The Panel would appreciate an explanation of what work is ongoing to fully understand the data and learn how much of increased crime recording is due to increased reporting. The Panel is pleased that the PCC and Leicestershire Police share the Panel's concerns regarding the regular changes to the crime recording standards which have taken place and have made it difficult to analyse trends over the years and compare crime types. Nevertheless, the Panel commends the PCC and Leicestershire Police for the improvements made in response to the critical audit by HMICFRS about crime recording.

The Panel thanks the PCC for his support for the Troubled Families Programme, (known as Think Family in Leicester City, Supporting Leicestershire Families in Leicestershire and Changing Lives in Rutland) and believes this is a worthwhile project which can produce results both in improving the lives of those families the Programme works with and producing savings for the emergency services and other agencies. The Panel is aware that the full impact of the Programme can be hard to quantify as it can never be known how the lives of the families would have progressed had they not received the intervention from the Programme. Nevertheless, the Panel, particularly its Independent Members, would appreciate any indications the PCC can give regarding the full impact of the Troubled Families Programme.

The Panel is interested to note the number of calls made to the United Against Violence and Abuse (UAVA) helpline and thanks the PCC for clarifying that the majority of these calls are from local authorities, the police and health professionals rather than the victims themselves. The Panel notes that there are some self-referrals to UAVA and was concerned to discover that many of these are from repeat victims who have referred themselves to UAVA on more than one occasion. The Panel is reassured that individuals who are involved in violence or abuse on more than one occasion are referred into the MARAC process. Nevertheless, the Panel is of the view that there should be better liaison and information sharing between UAVA and district councils regarding victims of violence and abuse. If district councils have more information regarding the identities of the victims then they can provide greater support to the victims such as with housing. The Panel thanks the PCC for pointing out that local authorities are on the Board of UAVA and hopes that greater partnership working can be undertaken in future with regards to victims of violence and abuse.

The Panel supports the PCC's decision to continue to operate the Youth Commission and looks forward to meeting some of its members and receiving a report at the October 2018 Panel meeting on the work of the Commission. The Panel is particularly pleased to note that the membership of the Commission now includes people who have been involved with criminal activity in the past as this adds value and experience to the Commission's work. The Panel would appreciate further information on how the Youth Commission members are representative of, and engaged with, the different communities of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

The Panel looks forward to receiving an update on the success of the Youth Commission event in September designed to involve other young people in the area.

The Annual Report contains little reference to the impact illegal drugs can have on communities therefore it was reassuring to hear the PCC emphasise at the Panel meeting that tackling drugs is a priority and that there is a zero tolerance approach. The Panel is aware that addressing the harmful effects of alcohol and drugs on local communities is an aim set out in the Police and Crime Plan and at a future Panel meeting the Panel intends to scrutinise the PCC on how successful he has been with achieving this aim. The Panel thanks the PCC for pointing out that rehabilitation is an important element of tackling drugs related crimes and the Panel is aware that the PCC jointly commissions the Turning Point substance misuse service. The Panel hopes that district councils can assist the Police with tackling the issue of drugs by for example providing CCTV evidence.

The Panel has previously raised concerns about how the performance of the PCC can be measured as he has not set himself any numerical targets or key performance indicators. Whilst the Annual Report contains some positive messages it can still be challenging for the Panel and the public to judge how far the PCC has got in achieving the aims set out in the Police and Crime Plan.

Overall the Panel is of the view that in 2017/18 the PCC has built upon his positive start to his period in office and where there are areas of concern he recognises them and is making efforts to tackle them. The Panel appreciates the PCC's continued emphasis on partnership working and looks forward to supporting him as a critical friend in the future.