



**Extraordinary
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

10:00-12:00

11 February 2020

Present: Councillors Wright (chair), Ryan (vice chair), Fulton-McAlister (E) (substitute for Cllr Fulton-McAlister (M)), Giles, Grahame, McCartney-Gray, Oliver, Osborn, and Price (substitute for Cllr Carlo)

Apologies: Councillors Carlo, Fulton-McAlister (M), Manning, Sands (S) Sarmezey and Thomas (Vi)

1. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Police and Crime Commissioner visit

The chair welcomed Lorne Green, Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk, Superintendent Terry Lordan, Norfolk Constabulary and Dr Gavin Thompson, Director of Policy and Commissioning at the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk to the meeting.

A member asked whether in light of the precept of the PCC being increased several times and crime rates increasing, the PCC felt that his priorities delivered value for money. The PCC said the precept rose in response to the demands of policing. A public consultation was carried out across the county with 980 formal responses received. Fifty nine percent of respondents favoured an increase to the precept with 68% of these in favour of an increase in excess of the 2% proposed. The demand and complexity of issues faced by the police had grown exponentially impacted by the reduction in mental health provision. The demands meant that the increase was entirely justified.

By way of a follow up question, the member asked as crime rates were increasing, a big problem in Norwich was county lines activity which was only mentioned twice in the PCC plan and wondered if more visible policing would help with this. The PCC said that county lines was an invasion of drug dealing from metropolitan areas. Many young people were criminalised through county lines activity which was not productive. Instead, they needed access to services to help them. As long as the demand for drugs was there due to social and economic factors, the supply would be there.

A member asked how the PCC was lobbying against the cuts to mental health services. The PCC said that it was public health at the county council which had responsibility for this alongside social services. Mental health professionals had been installed in the police control room and two out of these five posts had been funded by the PCC as part of the precept increase. Police officers would take advice from these professionals in the control room. Terry Lordan said that the police had seen a rise in demand around mental health cases.

There were many factors contributing to the 3% increase in crime over the last year and people were getting better at reporting crime. In terms of county lines activity, Norwich had the best response with 11 lines being eliminated since November. The targets had been individuals at the end of the phones rather than the young people involved and sentences could be up to nine years.

The PCC said that there were 60 calls every 24 hours into the control centre regarding domestic violence, with many reporting historic crimes. This did not mean that there had necessarily been an increase in cases but an increase in reports of criminality. Norfolk was still in the top quartile of counties in terms of safety.

The chair said comments on safety from Norwich residents had a thread throughout that visible police patrolling would help to stamp out crime. In 2017, the PCC had said that he would not employ PCSOs but as a local councillor, the chair had found them to be highly valued as a deterrent.

The PCC said that the decision around PCSOs was not made by the PCC but was a decision of the Chief Constable which the PCC had scrutinised and supported. There were more uniformed officers than there were four years ago. In Norwich, 27 PCSOs were removed and 38 police officers were installed which represented an increase in neighbourhood policing. A member asked for clarification of the area referred to as 'the city' and Terry Lordan confirmed that this meant the Norwich City Council area. The officers dedicated to this area would attend meetings in communities and had good contact with local councillors and local groups. The PCC added that there were an additional 67 police officers promised by the government by the end of the next financial year and an increase of 225 overall. These officers would not always be on patrol but would also be tackling other work including fraud and grooming which showed how complex crime had become.

A member said that Norwich east had the highest number of incidents alongside a large population increase and wondered whether this would mean that this area would be first to be allocated additional police officers. The PCC said that this would be an operation led by the Chief Constable in response to demand. He would also want to see an improvement in the response rate on the 101 non-emergency number as part of the precept increase so there would be additional people in the control room.

Members discussed Mancroft Green and said that the area was subject to a no alcohol order. They questioned how the community could reclaim the space. Terry Lordan said that there had been incidents in this area but police were talking to the community about making the area safe. The police were only one aspect of this work however, and there was a need to work with partners.

In response to a member's question, the PCC said that with the removal of PCSOs, the amount of intelligence received by the police had increased as there were additional officers being deployed. Terry Lordan said that there had been an increase

in reports over the last 12 months and the police were collecting information in different ways, such as working with council staff who were visiting residents in their homes. There had also been Crimestopper campaigns launched for anonymous reporting. PCSOs were not able to make arrests or work past 11pm so the trade off with more police officers was a better one for the city.

A member asked why the PCC had taken the decision to stand down at the next election and wondered if it was due to a lack of progress or financial support from the government. The PCC said that he was frustrated that he had to drive over 150 miles a day to do his job. He said that he was passionate about the job and his team had worked hard with good results over the last four years. If he had more funding, he would put more resources into preventative work such as sending officers into schools and would work to increase refuges for male victims of domestic violence. He was pleased that Norfolk was rated as one of the top forces in the country.

Members discussed the issue of racial profiling and a member gave an example of a young black man being stopped several times by police for acting suspiciously and a young white man being stopped by the police and being told to go on his way with an apology from the police officer. She asked what steps were being taken to ensure that members of the public were not being treated differently, apparently based on their skin colour. The PCC said that no complaints of this nature had been received by his office in the last four years. Dr Gavin Thompson said that an Independent Advisory Group (IAG) had been set up with members representing different community groups with protected characteristics. The IAG was a point of contact between the police and local communities and they were looking to link the IAG with district commanders to feed in community issues. As it stood, the IAG had not raised any concerns around stop and search. Terry Lordan said that there was a stop and search scrutiny panel and each stop and search was considered by this panel. Dr Gavin Thompson said that stop and search performance data was published on the constabulary's website. The chair highlighted that the data online only went up to 2016 and asked if this could be updated.

A member asked about the provision of wellbeing support for police officers and staff. The PCC said that he had been lobbying MPs to encourage a pledge to attend to the wellbeing of all police officers, both in service and retirement, and to their families. There was a very good occupational health scheme in place and for those who suffered trauma, there was an employee assistance scheme to provide help.

A member said that he had some feedback from the public about the non-emergency policing number not being free to call and wondered if there was any scope to make this a free number to encourage residents to call. The PCC said that he would take the comments away for consideration.

A member commented that there was some great work happening in terms of community policing in Norwich with good links with local councillors and community groups. He said that at Old Library Wood, there were two Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) which were due for renewal in the autumn of 2020 but he had been told that the council was not looking to renew these. He wondered why this was the case and whether widening these to include Rosary Road would be considered. Terry Lordan said that if there was evidence that a PSPO would be of benefit to any area, the police would recommend this to the council but then it was up to the council to

implement these if necessary. He would check the data on kerb crawling incidents around Rosary Road to see if it needed to be submitted to the council. The PCC said that there was an initiative to combat street sex workers and the police were reaching out to these individuals through case workers. Dr Gavin Thomson said that intelligence was used to engage with victims.

A member said the CCTV often went unmonitored at peak times as there was no funding for this. Other areas had covered the monitoring of cameras by working with partners and volunteers. As the police was receiving more funding and more staff, he wondered if this would be a possibility. Terry Lordan said that the police would like for the cameras to be monitored 24 hours a day. A working group had been set up to review CCTV to look for ways to fill the funding gap so this work was ongoing. The PCC said that the police were also having to prepare budgets and prioritise and were not able to pick up services which could not be fulfilled elsewhere.

A member raised an issue that a resident had contacted him regarding antisocial behaviour on King Street and whether any consideration would be given to increasing CCTV provision there. Terry Lordan said that the camera locations were based on data so there would need to be a monitoring period before extending the provision.

A member raised the issue of residents being 'bounced' between the police and the council when reporting incidents, usually drug dealing in council properties, and asked whether the number of referrals to the council from the police was recorded anywhere. Terry Lordan said that every call and email would be logged but residents being bounced between the police and the council was not good service. He asked members to forward any specific examples they had of this happening to enable him to investigate further. The director of people and neighbourhoods said that a piece of work was already underway between the council and the police control room in relation to this.

A member said that she would like reassurance that those individuals being coerced into illegal behaviour would be treated as victims. Terry Lordan said that the priority was to look at those individuals who were perpetrating crimes rather than those with complex needs who were victims. The police response to a trafficking report was to put a safeguarding plan in place.

In response to a member's question on security doors being installed on council owned estates, Terry Lordan said that the police worked with stakeholders and gave advice on how to proactively reduce incidents of antisocial behaviour. The PCC said that he had asked the Chief Constable to allocate greater resources to tackling antisocial behaviour across the county so there would be more provision around 101 calls. Dr Gavin Thompson said that there was a Safer Streets fund of £25 million for projects across the country, there were strict criteria but security doors may fall within them. There would only be one bid submitted so there was a need to prioritise but as Norwich would feature heavily in the bid, work would be done with the director of people and neighbourhoods and local councillors on this.

The chair referred to comments from Norwich residents that incidents of vandalism were increasing and CCTV was not a deterrent. The PCC said that there was a youth commission which had been set up and police cadet groups. The police were not able to do everything, there were social and economic issues which needed to be addressed by working with partners.

A member raised the issue of the drugs epidemic and referenced the Chief Constable's comment that there was a need to look at a long term plan. He said that the city council had recently passed a motion around safe drug consumption spaces and ask the PCC to comment on whether he felt that the war on drugs had failed. The PCC said that he could not comment on the council's decision but he agreed that it was a social issue. It was not solely a police issue, there was a need to work with partners.

By way of a follow up question, a member asked what conversations had been had with public health around safe drug consumption spaces. Terry Lordan said that public health budgets had also been reduced and he was aware of the death rates related to drugs. The police were working with Pathways to offer help to individuals where possible. In the city centre, there were individuals with highly complex needs which was why the work with Pathways was so vital as it was able to offer direct support. The PCC said that research showed that ex-offenders who found gainful employment were at a reduced risk of re-offending. There was a group called the community chaplaincy which was made up of volunteers who would meet ex-prisoners as they were released from prison. Norwich was one of the safest university cities in the country with a 3% rise in antisocial behaviour as opposed to a 7% increase nationally.

A member asked that with increased cycling, what the police response to was to incidents such as cycling on pavements, which was intimidating for elderly people and those with visual impairments, as well as bike thefts. Terry Lordan said that there had been around a 20% reduction in bike thefts although the actual number remained high. The police were working with the Business Improvement District around secure bike parking. Accidents between bikes and cars were recorded. The PCC said that inappropriate use of bikes on footpaths was an issue around the county. Some enforcement orders were in place and police did take action around this.

A member said that knife crime had become a headline issue and asked where Norwich stood in relation to this. Terry Lordan said that Norwich was in one of the better positions nationally. There were a lot of driving factors for this including county lines where lots of arrests had been made. They were working with the Met so the issue had been acknowledged and work was being carried out around this. The situation was always evolving so there was a need to make Norfolk hostile to county lines activity. The PCC added that officers were making visits to schools to show a video which had been made around knife crime.

A member questioned whether an extension of PSPOs would give the police greater capacity to tackle crime. Terry Lordan said that there had to be evidence for a PSPO and the introduction of one would need to make an impact on the issue. The police worked with partners on these and an annual review would be submitted. They gave officers additional powers and allowed the police to take positive action around enforcement. The director of people and neighbourhoods said that there was a PSPO covering alcohol consumption in the city centre which was driven by the impact of alcohol on this part of the city. The use of a PSPO had to be proportionate to the issue and he reminded members that these gave officers additional powers and not additional resources.

(Councillor Ryan left the meeting at this point).

A member asked what work was being undertaken around reducing the number of people leaving prison who subsequently became homeless. The director of people and neighbourhoods said that by law, the council offered advice but it was up to the individual to take this up. The County Community Safety Partnership had meetings around this which were chaired by the office of the PCC and this group could look at more opportunities for the council to work with the PCC. The strategy manager said that the council was exploring a protocol to ensure a smooth transition for these individuals.

The chair thanked Lorne Green, Terry Lordan and Dr Gavin Thompson for attending and said their input had been useful to members both as scrutiny committee members and ward councillors.

RESOLVED to ask cabinet to:

- (1) Consider monitoring of CCTV provision in the city, including investigating pooling of resources,
- (2) Explore all avenues of collaboration between the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the city council; and
- (3) Conduct research into how Public Space Protection Orders are used in other cities to give the council an informed position on these, including working in partnership with the police

CHAIR