

# Public Document Pack

## HUMBERSIDE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

4 October 2021

### PRESENT: -

Hull City Council	Councillor S Chaytor Councillor D Matthews Councillor L Tock
East Riding of Yorkshire Council	Councillor J Abraham Councillor B Gateshill
North East Lincolnshire Council	Councillor P Silvester
North Lincolnshire Council	Councillor J Davison Councillor R Hannigan
Independent Co-opted Members	Mrs H Chase Mrs S Whittaker

The meeting was held at the Ergo Connects Centre, Bridgehead Business Park, Meadow Road, Hessle HU13 0GD.

- 395    **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS** - The Chairman welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting of the Humberside Police and Crime Panel and invited all in attendance to introduce themselves and identify the local authority they were representing.
- 396    **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Resolved** – That it be noted that apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Haroldo Herrera-Richmond MA (Hull City Council), Councillor Paul Nickerson (East Riding of Yorkshire Council) and Councillor Janet Goodwin (North East Lincolnshire Council).
- 397    **SUBSTITUTIONS - Resolved** – That it be noted Councillor Matthews was substituting for Councillor Herrera-Richmond MA.
- 398    **DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND PERSONAL OR PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS (SUCH DECLARATIONS ARE TO BE MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MEMBERS' RESPECTIVE COUNCIL'S CODE OF CONDUCT)** - There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests and personal or personal and prejudicial interests.
- 399    **TO TAKE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PANEL HELD ON 12 JULY 2021 AS A CORRECT RECORD AND AUTHORISE THE CHAIRMAN TO SIGN - Resolved** - That the minutes of the meeting of the Police and Crime Panel held on 12 July 2021, having been printed and circulated amongst the members, be taken as read and correctly recorded.

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- 400 **HUMBERSIDE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER - POLICE AND CRIME PLAN - 2021 – 2025** - The Chairman welcomed the Police and Crime Commissioner for Humberside to the meeting. Mr Evison had been invited to the meeting to present his Police and Crime Plan for 2021 to 2025.

The Commissioner introduced his plan and guided members through –

- the overall approach of the plan
- the plan and its application
- the vision, mission and values contained within the plan,
- the three key aims contained in the plan and how the plan would be measured.

Panel Members were afforded the opportunity to question the Commissioner on the draft Plan and also made a number of comments and observations, to which the Commissioner responded.

**Resolved** – (a) That the draft Police and Crime Plan for 2021 to 2025 be noted, and, (b) that in accordance with section 28(3) of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Secretary submit a report setting out the Panel's comments on the Police and Crime Plan to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

- 401 **HUMBERSIDE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER – UPDATE** - The Chairman invited the Police and Crime Commissioner to provide his Panel update. Mr Evison updated the members on the following –

- His initial meetings with key stakeholders following his election.
- Proactive dialogue with youth groups.
- Support being directed towards women and girls who are the victims of violence.
- 'Hotspot' funding.
- Visit to North Yorkshire Police.
- Meeting with Safer Roads Humber.
- Engagement with the Criminal Justice System to reduce the time taken for cases to be considered by the courts.
- Commissioning of a survey in Humberside to obtain views of all women and girls over their experiences.
- Work of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to secure additional resources for the area.
- Impact of the Sarah Everard murder on local residents' confidence in Humberside Police.

The Chairman then facilitated a discussion between the Panel Members and Mr Evison.

**Resolved** – (a) That the Police and Crime Commissioner be thanked for his attendance, presentation and for answering members questions, and (b) that the Panel consider a future agenda item on the Criminal Justice System.

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- 402 **ANNUAL ACCOUNTS AUDIT 2020-21** - The Chairman invited the Chief Finance Officer at the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to update the Panel on the latest position in relation to the Annual Accounts Audit for 2020-21.

The Panel heard that the statutory timetable for the 2020/21 Accounts was for the Chief Finance Officer to sign the Accounts by 31 July 2021 (this was completed on 19 July 2021) and for the audit to be completed by 30 September 2021.

The statutory notice for the public inspection of the Accounts was advertised and the inspection period ran for 30 working days from 20 July 2021.

However, in the wider local government audit market there were currently a number of significant factors at a national level. They were as follows:-

- a significant backlog of delayed 2019/20 audit opinions which are still outstanding;
- a shortage of audit staff with the requisite skills and experience, further exacerbated by high attrition rates;
- more demanding regulatory requirements which increase the time and resources needed to complete each audit;
- local bodies entering more frequently into innovative transactions which require detailed examination by auditors; and
- the challenges posed by the pandemic, including its implications for auditors' risk assessment and their work in relation to the financial resilience of bodies.

The external auditors responsible for the Humberside Police audit were Mazars. They had experienced some of the issues reported in the list above which had impacted their ability to deliver an audit opinion by 30 September 2021. Mazars had prioritised their resourcing to enable the audit to start on 13 September 2021. This would likely allow an audit opinion and completion by approximately mid-November 2021.

Members were informed that this situation had been closely monitored by the Police and Crime Commissioner's Chief Finance Officer and the Chief Constable's Chief Finance Officer. This has resulted in a formal request for an explanation from Mazars and also a meeting with Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) (who had responsibility for the appointment of auditors for local government) which included the PCC for Humberside to raise its concerns at the highest level.

The Chief Finance Officer concluded that the picture was one of market failure at a national level which PSAA are hoping to address as part of the tendering arrangements for the next appointments from 1 April 2023.

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The Chairman then invited the Police and Crime Commissioner to comment on the Annual Accounts Audit, before facilitating a discussion between Panel Members and the Chief Finance Officer and Mr Evison.

**Resolved** – (a) That the update be received with thanks, and (b) that the Panel be kept apprised of the progression of the Annual Accounts Audit for 2020-21.

- 403 **POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER GROUP FINANCE SUMMARY - PERIOD ENDING JULY 2021** - The Chairman invited the Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Finance Officer at the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to update the Panel on the Force budget. Mr Evison and Mr Wilson gave a comprehensive verbal presentation on the Force budget.

The Chairman then facilitated a discussion between the Panel Members and Mr Evison and Mr Wilson.

**Resolved** – That the Police and Crime Commissioner Finance Summary for the period ending July 2021 be received with thanks.

- 404 **RE-APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBER TO THE HUMBERSIDE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL** - The Secretary circulated a report that informed the Panel that the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (“the Act”) required that two independent co-opted members were appointed to the Humberside Police and Crime Panel. The term of appointment for independent members was four years. At the end of that term of office the Panel may appoint new independent members or re-appoint existing independent members for a further period.

The independent co-opted members must not be members of local authorities covered by the Humberside Police area. In co-opting an independent member, the Act required that the Panel must secure that (as far as was reasonably practicable), the appointed and co-opted members of the Panel, when taken together, had the skills, knowledge and experience necessary for the Panel to discharge its functions effectively. Unless the Panel were re-appointing an existing independent member, a recruitment process to select a new independent member must be carried out.

Mrs Whittaker was appointed by the Panel at its meeting on 27 June 2016. This followed a recruitment process which attracted 5 applicants, all of which were interviewed by a cross-party selection panel.

A similar recruitment process was undertaken and applications for the role were invited. The position was advertised on 28 July 2021, with the closing date for receipt of application being 27 August 2021.

There were three requests for application forms, as well as two telephone enquiries. However, only one application was received for the vacancy, received from existing Independent Co-opted Member Mrs Whittaker.

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As a result of Mrs Whittaker previously being interviewed and subsequently recommended for appointment by three members of the Panel in 2016, the Secretary does not believe that interviewing the candidate was necessary on this occasion. Consequently, the Secretary was recommending that Mrs Whittaker be re-appointed for a four year term of office.

**Resolved** - That Mrs Susan Whittaker be appointed to the independent co-opted member role on the Humberside Police and Crime Panel for a four-year term.

405    **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING** - Monday 29 November 2021 commencing at 1:30 pm.

406    **ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THAT MUST BE SPECIFIED** - There were no urgent items for consideration at the meeting.

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