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## NORTHUMBRIA PCC MINUTES

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**Title**

Business Meeting

**Date**

29 February 2024

**Location**

Teams/MEL

**Duration**

2pm-2.40pm

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**Present:**

Kim McGuinness – Police and Crime Commissioner  
Vanessa Jardine – Chief Constable (CC)  
Ruth Durham – Chief of Staff of the OPCC  
Adrian Pearson – Director of Planning and Delivery (OPCC)  
Tanya Reade – Corporate Governance Manager (NP)  
Kevin Laing – Joint Chief Finance Officer  
Alastair Simpson – ACC – Crime and Safeguarding (NP)  
Paul Godden – Head of Corporate Development (NP)  
Sarah Robson – Chief Inspector Staff Officer (NP)  
Steven Hume – Director of the VRU  
Laura Repton – Public Affairs and Governance Officer (OPCC)  
Vicki Wilson – Minute Taker (OPCC)

**Apologies:**

Jayne Meir – Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)

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### OPEN SESSION

**1. Minutes of the open session of Business Meeting held on 25 January 2024**

The minutes were agreed as a true record.

**2. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising that had not been included in the agenda.

**3. National Issues Impacting on Policing**

The CC referenced the recent announcement of potential increased police security for MPs. The ACC for Crime and Safeguarding gave a brief update of the national current stance and noted a protocol was being drawn up with further detail and clarity.

The CC would be writing to all MPs in the area to discuss this issue, along with other matters, and would also invite them for an optional face to face discussion.



The PCC noted the recent media coverage regarding the Sarah Everard case and that there had been suggestions of failed communication between forces and vetting departments. The CC would further investigate the information that had come to light and would ensure to act appropriately where needed.

#### **4. Violence Reduction Unit Update (VRU)**

The Director of the VRU highlighted the main points from the report.

In line with the requirements of the duty, the three mandatory products had been submitted to the Home Office and all documents had previously been shared with all specified authorities.

Particular attention had been drawn to the wards with complex settings, and it was noted that the reports incorporated from the hospital could give potentially artificial readings as to where they would be ranked as a hot spot for violence. Due to this, these complex areas would be recalculated to seek further clarity on the wider issues.

The next Serious Violence Reduction Board on 12 March would concentrate on the interim evaluation work and look at how the interventions had performed over the past 12 months. The Northumbria Combatting Drugs Partnership would also be offering a presentation at the board meeting and this link would continue to be developed.

Various emerging issues had been outlined as per the report.

At the Strategic Violence Reduction Board meeting on 29 January 2024 it was agreed the Serious Violence Fund labour costs of £115,562 would be equally split between the six CSP areas to strengthen analytical support to develop a more robust SNA.

In relation to the non-labour costs of the Serious Violence Fund, agreement was reached in January 2023 to allocate this to each Community Safety Partnership with an annual grant for 2023/24 and 2024/25 of £30K for seasonal violence initiatives.

Following a query from the CC, it was advised that there would be a highlight report from the external evaluator, Rocket Science, available at the board meeting on 12 March.

#### **5. Approval of the Council Tax Precept and Revenue Budget 2024/25**

The Chief Finance Officer highlighted the main points from the report.

For the financial year 2024/25, the proposed Group revenue budget stood at £379.464m. The Group budget was held by the Police and Crime Commissioner who provided financial resources to the Chief Constable to deliver operational policing. The budget delegated to the Chief Constable for 2024/25 was £362.922m. The OPCC budget of £1.847m covered the running costs of the Commissioner and the office, covering all administration and governance arrangements.



At 31 March 2024, the Commissioner's General Reserve was estimated at £10.804m (2.8% of revenue expenditure) in addition to other reserves which were earmarked for specific purposes.

During 2023/24 the Council Tax base in the Northumbria force area increased by an average 1.51% to 414,151 (Band D equivalent properties). The increase in the Council Tax base for 2024/25 represented an increase of £1.041m in precept income when compared with 2023/24 which was slightly higher than the expected increase of 1.40% within last year's MTFS forecast.

The proposal was to increase the Council Tax precept by £13.00 per year for a Band D property which equated to an increase of 7.70%. The Commissioner had stated that they 'firmly believes Government should step-up and fully fund our police force. The Home Office has repeatedly turned down these requests and wants the cost of policing passed to local residents.'

The proposed increase was supported by the results of a public consultation during January 2024 and would provide additional income to continue to support local policing services in the face of a challenging financial situation.

The PCC approved the requests as outlined in the key decision.

## **6. Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2024/25 – 2027/28**

The MTFS report had been circulated in full. The report set out the key financial issues facing the Police and Crime Commissioner over the period 2024/25 to 2027/28 and provided options for delivering a sustainable budget and capital programme over the medium term.

It also set out how the Commissioner could provide the Chief Constable with the resources to deliver the priorities in the Police and Crime Plan. The MTFS set the financial context for the Commissioner's revenue budget, capital programme and precept decisions.

The PCC approved the recommendations set out in the Key Decision.

## **7. Capital Strategy 2024/25 – 2027/28**

The Capital Strategy had been circulated in full.

The Capital Strategy provided a high level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contributed to the provision of services along with an overview of how associated risk was managed and the implications for future financial sustainability. The Strategy set the framework for all aspects of the PCC's capital and investment expenditure.



The PCC approved the recommendations as outlined in the Key Decision.

#### **8. Reserves Strategy Statement – 31 March 2024**

The Reserves Strategy Statement had been circulated in full.

The Statement included details of current and future planned reserve levels, for both revenue and capital reserves, and provided information for the period of the commissioners Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2024/25 to 2027/28.

The Reserves Strategy Statement 31 March 2024 was fully aligned with the Commissioners Budget 2024/25, MTFS and Capital Strategy 2024/25 to 2027/28.

The PCC approved the recommendation as outlined in the Key Decision.

#### **9. Forward Plan – Open Session**

The Forward Plan had been noted.

#### **10. Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

#### **11. Date and Time of next meeting**

The next meeting would take place on Thursday 25 April – 2pm – Middle Engine Lane/Teams.