

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Minutes of a meeting of the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel held at Great Hall, The Guildhall, Northampton NN1 1DE on Thursday 8 September 2022 at 1.00 pm.

Present Councillor Gill Mercer (Chair)
 Councillor Andre Gonzalez De Savage (Vice-Chair)
 Councillor Dorothy Maxwell
 Councillor Zoe McGhee
 Councillor Russell Roberts
 Councillor David Smith
 Councillor Winston Strachan
 Mrs Anita Shields
 Miss Pauline Woodhouse

Substitute
Members: Councillor Paul Clark
 Councillor Philip Irwin
 Councillor Greg Lunn

Also in

Attendance: Stephen Mold, Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner
 Councillor Ian Jelley, North Northamptonshire Council
 Ann Battom, Chair of the Joint Independent Audit Committee
 Deborah Denton, Joint Head of Communications, Office of the Police,
 Fire & Crime Commissioner
 Paul Fell, Director of Delivery, Office of the Police, Fire & Crime
 Commissioner
 Helen King, Chief Finance Officer, Office of the Police, Fire & Crime
 Commissioner
 Nicci Marzec, Director for Early Intervention, Head of Paid Service and
 Monitoring Officer, Office of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner
 Stuart McCartney, Governance & Accountability Manager, Office of
 the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner
 Mick Stamper, Chief Superintendent – Enabling Services,
 Northamptonshire Police
 Paul Hanson, Democratic Services Manager, West Northamptonshire
 Council
 James Edmunds, Democratic Services Assistant Manager, West
 Northamptonshire Council
 Diana Davies - Democratic Services Officer, West Northamptonshire
 Council

Apologies Councillor Adam Brown
for Councillor Jon-Paul Carr
Absence: Councillor Ken Pritchard

There were also two members of the public in attendance.

81. **Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitute Members**

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Councillors Brown, Carr and Pritchard substituted by Councillors Lunn, Irwin and Clark respectively.

82. **Notification of requests from members of the public to address the meeting**

None received.

83. **Declarations of Interest**

None Declared.

84. **Chair's Announcements**

The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting and reminded the Panel:

- The meeting would be webcast live and participants would need to utilise their microphones.
- That, with a full agenda, members should make their discussion focussed.

85. **Minutes**

RESOLVED that: the minutes of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel public meeting held on 6 July 2022 be approved.

RESOLVED that: the minutes of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel private meeting held on 6 July 2022 be approved.

RESOLVED that: the minutes of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel public meeting held on 19 July 2022 be approved.

86. **Joint Independent Audit Committee Annual Report 2021/22**

The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) stated that he was sure all present sent their best wishes to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II given emerging news about the state of her health.

The PFCC commented that the Joint Independent Audit Committee (JIAC) had supported the effective governance of the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (OPFCC) and assisted him to hold the Chief Constable to account. The importance of the JIAC's role in assisting, and the provision of critical oversight of the work of the PFCC was noted. It was further considered best practice to bring the JIAC's annual report to the Police Fire and Crime Panel.

The Chair of the JIAC then presented the report and highlighted the following points:

- The JIAC had recruited a new member and was undergoing a further recruitment exercise to fill the remaining vacancy.

- The JIAC report provided a summary of activities from the financial year 2021/22 and provided assurance of good governance and practice.
- The JIAC had considered its terms of reference in 2021/2022 and it was not proposed to make any changes to them at this point.
- The JIAC was pleased to note that positive steps had been made to improve the quality of reporting and that the force and Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) had adopted the same format and structure for reports and in some cases had combined reporting bring consistency to the reports.
- The JIAC also commented that the officers had been supportive of the JIAC's work and operated in an open and transparent manner.
- External audit had not yet signed off the 2020/2021 accounts. The JIAC and OPFCC had taken all possible action to try to address this. Not being a named party on the external audit contract had restricted the ability of the OPFCC to progress the matter to a conclusion.
- A project to bring enabling services back in-house was being progressed and the JIAC would continue to focus on the project as one of their key work streams.
- The JIAC had taken part in an Estates Programme Workshop, to appreciate how estates had been impacted by different working modes, the link with capital budget, audits recommendations and the completed actions plans. It had been identified that this would be a longer term project, estimated to be a 20 year programme.
- The Chair commended the work carried out by the JIAC and the due diligence shown in approaching the challenges dealt with during the year.

The Panel considered the Annual Report and members made the following points during the course of their discussion:

- Delays in the completion of external audits caused concern and the Panel asked for clarification on how the OPFCC would manage associated risks.
- The Panel discussed the merits of the Chair of the Police Fire and Crime Panel also making representations to the Home Secretary.
- The OPFCC team should be commended for their efforts to resolve the outstanding issue relating to the auditing of the accounts.
- Would the setting of the Parish Precept be affected by accounts remaining unsigned?

- Was Darby House under-occupied and what action was being taken to maximise its cost-effectiveness?
- Clarification on the status of the Police estates in terms of the short, medium and long term programme was sought.
- Panel members considered it would be beneficial if the PFCC would consider providing an update on the estates strategy.
- Clarification was sought regarding the decision to terminate the MINT LLP that had had been included in the report on changes to the delivery of procurement services considered by the JIAC.

The Chair of the JIAC made the following additional points during the course of the discussion:

- As the external audit contract was part of a framework let by Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) the JIAC was only able to make representations about the issues experienced. The delayed signing off of accounts had not been limited to Northamptonshire. The external auditors had advised that they saw no causes for concern in Northamptonshire and that signing off the accounts should only represent a technical step.
- The reference in the Annual Report to NFRS having made good progress with the provision of a capital programme reflected that NFRS had transferred across to the PFCC without a capital budget. Now, with a capital budget they would be in a position to fund an estates programme and the good progress had been noted in the report.
- MINT LLP had been the vehicle through which procurement was provided. The JIAC had considered the process to provide in-house procurement and had been assured of the benefits to making the change.

The Chief Finance Officer made the following points during the course of the discussion:

- Each Police Force and PCC had separate contracts for internal audit and everyone in the East Midlands had used the same auditor which assisted with the audit of the regional collaborations. The OPFCC had undertaken a tendering exercise for a new consolidated collaboration, the contracts for 2023/24 would be reviewed and awarded in due course. NFRS had separate contract arrangements for auditing which would cease in March 2023 when they would be included in the new regional contract.
- The external audit sector nationally had experienced challenges since the current contract had started in 2018 in terms of the technical requirements; increase in public sector audits, staff turnover, sickness and loss of expertise. PSAA had since 2018/ 2019, publicised the number of accounts produced on time, and audited on time; and it was anticipated that the number that failed to

be audited by the September 2022 deadline would increase in comparison to earlier years. In September 2021 the PFCC had written to the national lead of external audit following advice that external auditors would prioritise work on larger public organisations rather than police forces and Fire and Rescue services.

- The 2020/2021 accounts for NFRS had been signed off, clean unqualified in February 2022. The external audit of police 2020/2021 accounts was still in-progress. Nationally, no external audits of 2021/2022 accounts had started.
- The PFCC had, and the Chief Finance Officer would continue to make representations to the Home Office and PSAA.
- The OPFCC had an active risk management procedure and regularly monitored risks and they would continue to monitor and update the risks associated with the 2021/2022 accounts remaining open.
- It was anticipated that, should the accounts remain unsigned, any change to the figure for the Parish Precept would be minimal.
- The Police already had a continuing pattern of condition survey for estates when NFRS governance transferred to the PFCC, whereas additional focus on NFRS estates was needed.

The PFCC made the following points during the course of the discussion:

- Continued work on the estates strategy would look at the utilisation of all buildings, and formulating a programme of projects for the short, medium and long term, with a view to rationalising the entire estate.
- Estates and the disposal of some buildings provided some complex and unexpected challenges.
- The condition survey of the inherited NFRS buildings identified the need to invest in the region of a million pounds to update the estate to the required standard.
- He could bring an update on estates to a future Panel meeting. It would be logical to do so after the 2023/2024 precepts had been presented.

RESOLVED that:

- a) The panel notes the Joint Independent Audit Committee Annual Report 2021/22.**
- b) The Panel agreed the Chair would write to the Home Secretary regarding the delays in the completion of external audits.**
- c) The Panel requests the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to present an update on the Estates Strategy to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel work programme.**

87. Police, Fire & Crime Plan Delivery Update

The PFCC presented the Police, Fire and Crime Plan Delivery update and highlighted the following points:

- This was the first update presented to the Panel on the new Police, Fire and Crime Plan and he welcomed any feedback on the format used.
- The delivery update included some Force performance data published on the OPFCC website as context and to show how the Force, and NFRS, were held to account for their performance.
- A further bid for the Safer Streets funds had been successful.
- The OPFCC Community Road Safety Fund identified up to £5k to allocate to community groups, schools parish and town councils to enable them to implement solutions to identified road safety issues in the local community.
- Grants provided had included the installation of vehicle activated signs, school road safety systems, installation of village gates at a rural location to slow down traffic and educational programmes for the riding of scooters.
- Through the Youth Commission the OPFCC had delivered a consultation exercise with young people on the subject of road safety resulting in a new version of the educational video 'Too Fast, Too Soon; a new educational production on the breaking and stopping distances and the consequence of speeding.
- The OPFCC had also provided funds to projects to educate young, vulnerable groups on the road, through the Car Craft Event and the Bike Safe Scheme.
- Funding had been put in place for the Under 18 pathfinder Scheme.
- The update demonstrated the breadth of work done by the OPFCC.

The Panel considered the report and members made the following points during the course of their discussion:

- It would be beneficial to the Panel to receive a detailed report on Road Safety at a future Panel meeting.
- Sickness levels and interoperability had been a concern in the report and confirmation was sought that the situation had improved to the satisfaction of the PFCC.
- Whilst it was noted that the PFCC was satisfied with the Chief Constable's measure of success against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) it would be

helpful for the Panel to have more access to performance information that would enable it to make comparisons between performance at different times.

- Would the PFCC have any suggestions for the Council to address the significant rise in Cold Calling?
- Did the PFCC consider crimes were recorded in a timely manner?
- The Panel gave consideration to the merits of the OFPCC canvassing members of the public to gauge their perceptions of contact with the Police Force as an additional source of data.
- Improvements had been made within the Force and attitudes had improved and there was no evidence of complacency. It was asked that message be conveyed
- Could the PFCC provide reassurance to the public that adequate funding was being provided to the Chief Constable to enable sufficient support to the victims of rape and other sexual offences and violence against a person in light of the increase in recorded offences evidenced in the statistics.
- Had the Force fully utilised all opportunities to engage with the community and media to ensure resilience for the community funding projects initiatives and receive their observations?
- It would be interesting for the Panel to hear how many of crime resolutions could be attributed to community agreements.
- Historically Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), some funded by the Borough Council, had patrolled Northampton and had helped to prevent crime. However, Police officers and PCSOs would not currently be considered visible. A request was made that a copy of the PCSOs review referred to at the Police Accountability Board on 14 January 2022 be shared on completion and that the residents and Councillors of Northampton be engaged to improve relationships with the Force.
- The Stop and Search statistics continued to indicate a disproportionate number of black people stopped. Could the PFCC provide a resolution to this concern?
- It was noted that the PFCC had raised concerns at the Police Accountability Board on 8 March 2022 about a downturn in performance relating to information requests under the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme. This issue was not mentioned at the next Accountability Board meeting and reassurance was sought about the latest position.
- The Panel should consider inviting the Chief Constable to attend a future Panel meeting to help to inform the Panel about how issues and challenges in Northamptonshire were being addressed.

The PFCC made the following points during the course of the discussion:

- He was comfortable that both the force and NFRS had managed and monitored sickness well and would continue to do so. The pandemic had caused particular concern from an accountability perspective.
- He continued to have concerns about interoperability. This was not a significant issue but he wanted both the Chief Constable and the Chief Fire Officer to understand his level of ambition, particularly in the current national financial situation. Whilst progress had been made to find efficiencies by; enabling services; sharing estates, fleet; and finances further efficiencies had been identified.
- He considered that the data appended to the report gave a good indication of the changing position on different types of crime. He monitored the overall position regularly and closely. It was essential to take a contextualised view of performance and also to think carefully about how data was discussed in public to avoid misunderstandings producing concerns
- The PFCC offered to hold an informal briefing session for the Panel to provide the detail behind the performance measures included in the Police, Fire & Crime Plan Delivery Update.
- Cold calling was a local authority responsibility although the Force was concerned by it. The increase in cold calling had been noted and the Force had initiated training with carers to enable them to identify the signs of fraud within the vulnerable community.
- Northamptonshire Police was one of the few forces nationally rated as 'good' in terms of crime recording. The national crime recording regime should also be more reflective of the nuances of cases: for example, a victim of domestic violence could report multiple incidents but not want the police to follow up all of them
- He anticipated providing a briefing to the Panel to provide an overview of the performance monitoring in relation to the recording of victims of crime
- In response to the Panel's queries regarding collection of data from the people that the police are serving and supporting the PFCC advised that in any given year, 96% of members of public would have no contact with the police. However, public feedback on performance was important and was sought in various ways. Enhancing neighbourhood policing was an example of an action that had been Informed by public views.
- He agreed that Northamptonshire Police was moving in the right direction. Several years ago the Force had effectively been put in 'special measures' by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). It was now in a mid-table position. The PFCC had made available additional resources, which enabled positive change and provided firm

foundations for the future. This should be reflected in the next inspection by HMICFRS in 18 months.

- The national funding formula for policing seemed to favour areas with high crime rates. Success should be judged in terms of the absence of crime. He had provided feedback to the government about incentivising forces for the absence of crime. As PFCC he sought to focus on securing positive outcomes that satisfied victims of crime. The positive outcome rate was probably the issue he discussed most with the Chief Constable.
- Delays in the criminal justice system had been a pressure point in achieving positive outcomes and could have a particular impact on women who had experienced sexual violence or domestic abuse.
- Domestic violence continued to be 20 to 25% of Northamptonshire Police's daily demand. The PFCC had funded Project PIPA as part of the overall response to this demand, focussing on working with perpetrators to identify and change their behaviour. This approach assisted in producing positive outcomes to crimes and in enhancing the Force's response to demand.
- Provision of early intervention and outreach to support families aiming to prevent adverse childhood experiences reduced the risk of the victim becoming the offender later in life.
- The Panel was aware of the effort he put into seeking to extract additional funding for Northamptonshire from the government. If crime rates continued to increase the PFCC did have some contingency that could be used to respond, for example by recruiting police officers above the target number. Preventing crime from occurring in the first place needed to be a key part of the overall response.
- Increase funding from government could see further investment in communities and in neighbourhood policing, which would help the Force to sustain the advances in crime prevention.
- Approximately 50 per cent of the PFCC's budget would be attained through the Council Tax, which would provide a degree of resilience for future service provision.
- Safer Streets funding had been used to put in place street lights in Corby.
- The PFCC considered the relationship between the police and the public to be one of its most important strengths with modern technology being used to address misinformation on social media, resulting in improved public confidence.
- Community Resolution Agreements (CRAs) were monitored, and the statistics viewed in conjunction with local/national events to assess their impact. Recent delays within the criminal justice system had led to a reduction in CRAs. The

OPFCC had implemented CRA training for officers to facilitate and improve engagement with defence barristers. Improved CRA rates would result in an increase in court availability, expediting hearings for significant crimes.

- An offer was made to connect outside of the Panel meeting to address a member's concerns with regards to the use of Stop and Search and for members to view the Stop and Search Working Group that met to scrutinise each case.
- He still held virtual meetings every 4-6 weeks for councillors in different areas.
- He agreed that there were not enough PCSOs but those in place did a good job. The Chief Constable was responsible for the deployment of PCSOs. If Northamptonshire was to receive additional resources from the government this would be put into neighbourhood policing, which involved PCSOs. Parish councils could fund PCSOs and he was also in discussions about this with new town councils in the county.
- There was no loss of focus on performance relating to information requests under the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme. He expected an update on this matter at the next Accountability Board meeting.

The OPFCC Director of Delivery made the following points during the course of the discussion:

- The Home Office commissioned a national organisation to evaluate all of the Safer Streets Projects and the OPFCC awaited the results of this.
- The OPFCC had undertaken interim evaluation of Safer Streets, round one projects. Early indications were of a positive impact, although the effect of COVID-19 was also a factor in this. The OPFCC would also do further evaluations of Projects at different stages.
- Funding for Safer Streets had enabled the OPFCC to tackle neighbourhood crime; domestic burglary; theft of and from motor vehicles and theft.
- Ancillary data collected related to provision of alley gates; reduction in fly tipping; and reduction in anti-social behaviour reports.
- The effect of the initiatives had brought drug dealing onto the streets where CCTV could effectively cover the areas. Further information would be shared on the interim evaluation.
- 7 of the current PCSO posts were sponsored with 2 further posts being considered.
- The OPFCC was in discussions with Northampton Town Council with regards to attending a meeting on 19 September 2022 to discuss policing in Northampton.

- Operation Repeat had enabled the training of in the region of 200 care workers in identifying fraud and had been successful. The Operation would be repeated for the next 2 years, with match-funding from Cadent Gas.

The Democratic Services Assistant Manager advised during discussion that if the Panel proposed to invite the Chief Constable to attend a future meeting it should consider the purpose of this, which should reflect the Panel's role of scrutinising and supporting the PFCC.

RESOLVED that:

- a) The panel notes the Police, Fire & Crime Plan Delivery Report.**
- b) The Panel requests the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner to hold a briefing for Panel members to receive the detail behind the performance measures included in the Police, Fire & Crime Plan Delivery Update.**
- c) The Panel requests the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner provide an interim evaluation of the Safer Streets Projects.**
- d) The Panel request the opportunity to observe the Stop and Search working group.**

88. Outcomes of the HMICFRS 2021/22 inspection of Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service

The PFCC presented the Outcomes of the HMICFRS 2021/2022 inspection of Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service and highlighted the following points:

- HMICFRS independent assessment had confirmed that NFRS provided a much improved service in keeping the county safe. Values and Inclusion had been identified as an area for improvement. The improvement of culture would be a key priority for the new Chief Fire Officer, the progress would be monitored and reported to the Panel.
- Further opportunities for collaboration would be identified within NFRS as the services embedded.
- The HMICFRS report identified that NFRS had made significant progress and he was proud of this.

The Panel considered the report and members made the following points during the course of their discussion:

- The HMICFRS report referred to the shortfall in the service's ICT infrastructure and it was questioned whether this reflected that improvements made as part of the development of Enabling Services were not in-place at that point.
- Reassurance was sought that PFCC had a robust process, action plan or strategy in place to address the HMICFRS's concerns with regard to, ensuring fairness and promoting diversity and managing performance and developing leaders, in order to engage and support staff - to improve the service; care of staff and to implement succession planning.

- Having undergone a successful recruitment process with 19 posts having been filled, the benefit and progress towards addressing the concerns in the HMICFRS report would be seen when they were established within post.
- The report had highlighted both Efficiency and Effectiveness as 'good' reflecting improvement in these areas, with room for improvement, which the PFCC had demonstrated he was addressing.

The PFCC made the following points during the course of the discussion:

- As a consequence of enabling services, a team of approximately 70 staff were now able to provide IT support to the NFRS. As an example of the PFCC's commitment to continuous improvement, the OPFCC had undertaken a procurement exercise for a new Command and Control Service for the NFRS.
- Subsequent to the issue of the inspector's report, a Statutory Action Plan had been produced for NFRS and would be submitted to the HMICFRS. Whilst he held a view of what should be included in the wider action plan, the ownership and implementation of the plan would be the responsibility of the incoming Chief Fire Officer. The wider plan would be shared in due course.
- Whilst Equality had been highlighted as an area for improvement in the HMIFRS report, it had been previously been noted as an area of concern through the NFRS accountability process. He informed the Panel that he was committed to changing behaviours in order to create a working environment where staff felt safe and respected thereby allowing staff to maximise their full potential.
- Whilst the report had identified that there were areas of non-compliance with the Equality Act 2010 by NFRS he was confident that robust procedures were in place to challenge and address the unacceptable cultural attitudes.
- Implementation of change had begun on the transfer of NFRS and measures to address the efficiency and effectiveness had exceeded the requirement for improvement outlined in the report.
- A critical challenge would be to provide support to the firefighters and fire staff by creating an environment of respect, improving facilities and providing effective equipment, and ensuring that improvements were sustainable in a competitive employee market.
- The report indicated that NFRS had strategic action plans in place, and he was keen to ensure they were embedded and would be monitoring the progress.
- Having made significant improvements over two years he commended the NFRS leadership team's achievement in bringing about the positive changes and improving the safety of the public.

RESOLVED that:

- a) The panel notes the HMICFRS Report.
- b) The Panel requests the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner provide sight of actions plans developed to address areas for improvement in service delivery as identified in the HMICFRS 2021/22 Inspection.

89. **Use of Automated Number Plate Recognition technology in Northamptonshire [Presentation]**

The PFCC introduced the presentation and highlighted the following points:

- ANPR was used to detect, deter and disrupt criminality at local force, regional and national level.
- £1.3 million investment in ANPR technology had doubled the network coverage across Northamptonshire; in Northampton, rural areas, other major towns and at the county borders.

The OPFCC Director of Delivery, and the Chief Superintendent – Enabling Services, delivered a presentation giving an overview of the development and use of ANPR in Northamptonshire and the outcomes achieved.

The OPFCC Director of Delivery highlighted the following points:

A description of the functionality of ANPR was given:

- ANPR technology was used to detect, deter and disrupt criminal activity at a local, force, regional and national level. When a vehicle passed an ANPR camera, its registration number would be read and instantly checked against database records of vehicles of interest.
- Police officers could then stop the vehicle, speak to the occupants and, where necessary, make arrests.

Objectives relating to the use of ANPR were two-fold, to improve capability and the response to fighting crime:

- Protecting the county border, increasing protection of rural areas, increasing protection of county towns, improving the response to emerging crime series, preventing & disrupting crime and increasing intelligence resource to process data & support network.

Highlights of the recent ANPR Expansion were:

- The installation of 150 additional camera sites (161 cameras), the addition of 7 new car kits in-built and 10 rapid deployment cameras being regularly used across the county. And increased staffing resources; 1 ANPR Field engineer, 1 Auditor and 3 additional Intel Officers.

The OPFCC Director of Delivery further noted:

- The aim of the ANPR Extension Programme undertaken was a high-level strategic examination of situation within Northamptonshire with a view to increasing the capability of the organisation to address criminal activity.
- Northamptonshire shared borders with 8 counties.
- Review the map of Northamptonshire and identified the roads used to access the county.
- Examined the effectiveness of coverage of the existing ANPR cameras in both rural and urban areas.
- Placing 150 additional cameras in hot spots in Northampton, Wellingborough, Kettering, Corby, Daventry, Towcester, Rushden and in the town centre. 20 new cameras would be added to sites owned by Highways England.
- Improving the force response to emerging crime.
- Preventing and disrupting criminals and restricting passage across Northamptonshire's roads.
- Increasing the use of ANPR intelligence to gather retrospective evidence, post criminal offence.
- Capital investment of £1.3 million had been allocated to the ANPR project.
- The project was funded from the excess monies collected from speeding fines and payments for attendance at speed awareness courses.
- 2.5 to 3.2 million number plates would be read daily in Northamptonshire. The OPFCC had allocated staffing from existing resources to analyse the data.

The Chief Superintendent – Enabling Services highlighted the following points:

- The Number of ANPR Activations for the period 1 January 2022 – 31 March 2022 totalled 267,927.
- 137,638 (51%) of activations had been on the existing cameras.
- 130,289 (49%) activations on the new cameras.
- Individual vehicle activations for the period for the period 1 January 2022 – 31 March 2022 totalled 9,269. 3,718 (40%) of activations had been on the existing cameras and 1,797 (19%) activations on the new.

- A geographical breakdown of activations indicated; Corby 8%, Daventry 12%, East Northants 10%, Kettering 12%, Northampton 33%, South Northants 10% and Wellingborough 14%.
- The enhancement of capability had resulted in; £78m drugs being seized, 94% increase in vehicles of interest being sighted, 880 VRNs being identified and linked to crime investigation and 439 cloned vehicles being identified since July 2021.
- Fighting Crime Initiatives; Operation Jaguar - of 143 Vehicles stopped 44 vehicles had been seized and 26 arrests made. In March 2022, as a result of Operation Opus, 100 vehicles were seized, and 19 arrests made for variety of offences including recalls, robbery, burglary & drug driving. 242 arrests could be directly attributed to ANPR Intel team, many out of force arrests were as a consequence of vehicles being identified in Northamptonshire.
- Operation Typhoon had been set up to address keyless vehicle theft series at both towns and villages and Operation Pound as a response to a series of caravan and trailer thefts across Daventry and South Northants rural areas.
- ANPR team had provided evidence to; support in numerous murder cases, most notably Operation ARUBA, and for the apprehension of a male wanted for multiple rapes, burglary, theft and failure to recall to prison.
- Over a two week period, spanning August and September, the ANPR intel team had reported 10 arrests; 3 for commercial burglary, and 7 for theft from vehicles.

The Chief Superintendent – Enabling Services further noted:

- The majority of ANPR readings were attributed to law-abiding citizens.
- The number of cameras in each area would be proportionate to the amount of crime recorded.
- All officers would flag vehicles up for attention.
- Using ANPR technology Northamptonshire Police had assisted in cross border operations to resolve crime and bring about positive outcomes.

The Panel considered the presentation and members made the following points during the course of their discussion:

- Clarification was sought regarding the sharing of data with DVLA with regard to cloned vehicles.
- Panel members applauded the work carried out across other police forces and deliberated the possible impact on resources and budgets.
- Consideration was given to the volume of traffic that traverses Northamptonshire, and the complexities of managing the volume of data from

the network of roads with the resources available. Further insight was sought into prioritisation.

- Clarification was sought regarding replacement of non-functioning ANPR cameras and the technical capabilities of the ANPR System.
- A Panel member noted that he had experienced the positive impact on the public perception of Northamptonshire Police as a result of successful cross border working between Thames Valley Police and Northamptonshire Police.
- An explanation was sought regarding Northamptonshire Police's thresholds for qualifying markers for crime types and the responsible officer for setting them.
- It was questioned whether it would be appropriate for a Local Authority to request the analytical vehicle tracing data from Northamptonshire Police, for use in the prosecution of fly tipping.
- Panel members praised the OPFCC Director of Delivery and the Chief Superintendent for the clarity of the presentation and commended the work of Northamptonshire Police.

The PFCC made the following points during the course of the discussion:

- Northamptonshire had a comprehensive network of roads. The benefit to the public of Northamptonshire Police addressing out of county criminal activity within Northamptonshire would outweigh the small impact on cost and resources.
- The amalgamation of ANPR cameras and monitoring systems was beneficial and further improvements were anticipated.
- The quality of markers placed on the intelligence data could be improved.
- The Police dashboard showed 10 missing persons (MISSPER) in Northamptonshire. Current ANPR technology would be utilised to assist, alongside the CCTV Network, with finding them in a timely manner. It was estimated that 78 person hours would be spent per day to locate MISSPERs, any improvement in technology and connectivity of working practices would improve recovery time and enable resources to be redeployed to addressing criminal activity.

The OPFCC Director of Delivery made the following additional points during the course of the discussion:

- Addressing out of county criminal activity would be considered a good use of resources, contributing to making safer Northamptonshire's streets.

- When the ANPR system identified a cloned vehicle via the index plate or vehicle registration number plate the DVLA would share the information data with Northamptonshire Police.
- The PFCC had invested in an app called Qlik, a visualisation tool, which enabled the OPFCC Director of Delivery and the Chief Superintendent to monitor the three sets of data from the 3 million reads per day.
- The Local Authority had been advised that they could purchase ANPR cameras which could be fitted through the data impact assessment to the National ANPR service.
- The Safer Roads Alliance had met and were in the process of consulting with the Chief Executives of the Local Authorities, the NPFCC and the NPC regarding the options for additional speed cameras.

The Chief Superintendent – Enabling Services made the following additional points during the course of the discussion:

- ANPR markers were placed on a car linked to a criminal or criminal activity. The detail within the marker enabled the classification of the crime type and for it to be prioritised accordingly. Dispatchers were well skilled in identifying threat and deploying resources appropriately.
- In making an application for a marker there would be a degree of officer's judgment, there was no defined criteria beyond being proportionate and necessary.
- ANPR could be used as an overt surveillance tool, gathering information about the location of a car, or as a direct surveillance tool, which would be regulated and require the authorisation of a Superintendent. This enabled the tracking of an individual to gather private information.
- The locating of a ANPR camera would be subject to a data protection impact assessment and justification provided.
- Northamptonshire Police did not provide a service to external agencies to share information to prevent a crime being committed. The force might be in a position to share information if, in doing so, it would not identify an individual and would be a subject of discussion with the local police contact.
- The ANPR cameras and speed cameras worked on two different systems and each had separate and distinct functions.

RESOLVED that: the information contained in the Automated Number Plate Recognition presentation be noted.

90. **Fire & Rescue Authority Budget Update**

The PFCC presented the report, highlighting that it set out the latest forecast budget position in the context of a very uncertain economic situation. The Chief Finance Officer emphasised that early outturn forecasts were always prudent and represented the position without any mitigating action.

The Panel considered the report and members raised the following points during the course of discussion:

- Further information was sought on the reasons for the forecast overspend on wholetime response.
- The Fire Brigades Union had rejected the national pay offer of a 2% increase. It was questioned whether there was any provision in reserves for a higher pay offer should this result.

The Chief Finance Officer provided additional information in response to points raised by members during the course of discussion as follows:

- The forecast overspend on wholetime response was the result of various factors, including the very hot summer, continuing COVID-19 sickness absences at the start of the year and a prudent approach to managing the impact of in-year retirements. The PFCC maintained oversight of the forecast outturn position, which was improving as the year progressed as should be expected.
- The Chief Finance Officer had regular discussions with the Home Office about Fire & Rescue finances, which would help to inform its view about whether there was a case for providing additional resources.
- Both NFRS and the force were affected by the impact of the current economic situation on their supply chains and operating costs.
- The PFCC had some reserves that could be used to mitigate the impact of the national pay offer as far as possible, but there were already pressures on the base budget. If necessary, a case for additional resources connected with the pay offer would be made to the Home Office.

The PFCC made the following points during the course of discussion:

- All of the eight new fire appliances procured for NFRS had now been delivered. Four were operational and the remainder would be brought on-stream in the next few weeks.
- Representations were already being made to the government about the need to recognise the local impact of future pay awards for both firefighters and police officers.

RESOLVED that: the Panel notes the Fire & Rescue Authority Budget Report.

91. **Policing Budget Update**

The PFCC presented the report setting out an overview of the latest position concerning the policing budget.

The Panel considered the report. The PFCC responded to points raised by members during the course of discussion as follows:

- It was still intended that the force should have 1,501 police officers by the end of March 2023. It was on-track to achieve this target and the aim was then to sustain the establishment at this level.
- The operating costs of all properties in the estate were continually monitored, although pressures would remain. In the longer term the aim was to move to a smaller number of more efficient buildings. Lessons learned from operating Darby House were applied to other properties.

The Chief Finance Officer provided additional information in response to points raised by members during the course of discussion as follows:

- The PFCC had written to the government in 2021 concerning delays in the completion of external audits of the policing budgets. The Chief Finance Officer was currently co-ordinating further representations on behalf of all of her counterparts in the East Midlands.
- The forecast outturn position had improved slightly in July 2022 but the force continued to face different pressures. This was why the Chief Constable was tasked with managing the budgets delegated to him within an overall envelope.
- The number of police vehicles written off in the current year could be confirmed to the Panel following the meeting.

RESOLVED that:

- a) The Panel notes the Policing Budget Report.**
- b) The Panel requests the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner to provide the panel with the number of vehicles that had been written off in the year, for Northamptonshire.**

92. Police, Fire & Crime Panel Work Programme

The Democratic Services Assistant Manager presented the report setting out the Panel's overall work programme for 2022/23. The Panel was also asked to consider and agree the draft scope for proposed in-depth scrutiny work on early intervention, which had been drawn up by members appointed to the working group set up for this purpose. The draft scope was being presented to the current meeting with a view to enabling this work to progress.

The Panel considered the draft scope. Councillor McGhee, as the suggested chair for the working group, emphasised that it would be excellent for the Panel to commit to this valuable piece of work, which would be carried out constructively and with a view to assisting the PFCC.

The PFCC commented that work by the Panel on early intervention could assist in ensuring that relevant partners such as the two Northamptonshire local authorities were working together to best effect. This would reflect that expenditure by the OPFCC on early intervention represented a relatively small proportion of overall expenditure in the county.

Panel members made the following additional points:

- The choice of topic reflected that the Panel saw early intervention as an important part of the PFCC's remit.
- The two local authorities in Northamptonshire should be involved in the work as evidence-providers.
- Mrs Shields and Councillor Lunn expressed an interest in being involved in the working group. Miss Woodhouse also offered to contribute at the report-writing stage if this would be helpful.

The Chair subsequently invited Panel members to raise any points on the overall work programme that they wished the Panel to consider. A Panel member reiterated that the Panel should invite the Chief Constable to attend the Panel meeting on 1st December 2022 to give an overview of the force's current priorities, challenges and performance. Panel members commented that it might be more productive to hold a separate briefing session on this topic, as the Panel had done in the past. This could possibly be organised around the next Panel meeting, although the two sessions would need to be co-ordinated effectively.

The Chair advised that the National Association of Police, Fire & Crime Panels had recently discussed the use of pre-meetings by different panels to identify and co-ordinate lines of enquiry ahead of their formal meetings. The Panel considered the potential benefit and practicalities of adopting this approach. It was highlighted that a separate pre-meeting held between the publication of agenda papers and the respective Panel meeting could be organised as a virtual meeting.

RESOLVED that:

- a) The Panel agrees the proposed scope for scrutiny work on Early Intervention activity, subject to the following amendments:**
 - **Mrs Shields and Councillor Lunn would be added to the membership of the working group.**
 - **Miss Woodhouse would be involved in reviewing the draft report.**
- b) The Panel agrees to hold virtual pre-meetings ahead of future Panel meetings following publication of the agenda papers.**
- c) The Panel requests that a private briefing session with the Chief Constable on Northamptonshire Police's current priorities, challenges and performance be arranged around the Panel meeting on 1 December 2022 or as soon as possible afterwards.**

93. Complaints and Conduct Matters Update

The Democratic Services Assistant Manager presented the report, which advised that no new complaints or conduct matters relating to the PFCC had been recorded during the period April – August 2022. One existing complaint had been subject to Informal Resolution by the Panel's Complaints Sub Committee.

The Chair invited Panel members to raise any points relating to the report that they wished the Panel to consider.

RESOLVED that: the Panel notes the Complaints and Conduct Matters Update.

94. **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting closed at 4.40 pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____