

CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

A meeting of the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel was held on 30 January 2020.

PRESENT: Councillors R Arundale, C Dodds, J Goodchild, L Lewis, C McIntyre, J Rostron and J Thompson

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: S Wilson, Commissioner's Officer for Consultation & Engagement
J Salkeld, OPCC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager,
S Cowie, Chief Inspector Cleveland Police
K Corrigan, Cleveland Police Community and Diversity Officer
J Cain, Local Democracy Reporter

OFFICERS: S Blood and G Field

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Councillor B A Hubbard.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None declared

1 WELCOME AND EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair welcomed the members and officers to the Committee and read out the fire evacuation procedure.

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR OF THE CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

Nominations were sought for the appointment of Vice Chair of the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel.

Councillor Lewis was nominated, seconded, and appointed as Vice Chair of the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel.

AGREED that Councillor Lewis was appointed as Chair of the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel.

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 DECEMBER 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2019 were submitted and accepted as a true record.

4 COMMUNITY COHESION- WORKING WITH OUR PARTNERS- CLEVELAND POLICE AND THE OFFICE OF THE POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR CLEVELAND

Terms of reference 3 of the Panel's report on Community Cohesion, set out to examine the work that the Local Authority and its partners are undertaking to promote community cohesion and integration. With this in mind, the Panel agreed to invite representatives from the Police, Public Health and a representative from the North East Migration Partnership (NEMP) to the meeting.

With this in mind, the Chair welcomed Chief Inspector Scott Cowie, Cleveland Police and Katherine Corrigan, Cleveland Police Community and Diversity Officer, Sarah Wilson, Commissioner's Officer for Consultation and Engagement and Jenni Salkeld OPCC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager to the meeting.

The Chair asked the officers to introduce themselves and provide an overview of the projects they are involved in and how they linked to promoting community cohesion in Middlesbrough and Cleveland.

Chief Inspection Scott Cowie

The Inspector advised that he was the Chief Inspector for Community Engagement within Cleveland Police. Under his command were a number of departments, including:

- crime prevention
- Hate crime investigation
- community engagement team
- Offender management team
- Mental Health Liaison
- Early Intervention Officers

In terms of community policing, the Inspector expressed that over the past few years Cleveland Police had lost touch with a number of its communities. There were a number of factors associated with this breakdown, however the most significant was the removal of Neighbourhood policing. The previous Chief Constable had relocated Neighbourhood Officers to Response team to cope with demand at the time, however with the removal of on the street officers, confidence in the police amongst some communities has decreased and officers are unaware of the problems within these communities.

In response to these concerns, the recently appointed Chief Constable has promised to introduce a number of initiatives will be introduced, the first being the reintroduction of Neighbourhood Officers. Whilst the structure has not been finalised, there are plans to start reintroducing Neighbourhood Officers from April 2020 and it is hoped that there will be 1Neighbourhood Officer per Ward. They would be based centrally or within Coulby Newham.

The Panel queried whether the Neighbourhood officers would replace the PSCO's, and in response the Chief Inspector outlined that the Neighbourhood Officers would be in addition. The Director of Environment and Commercial Services also added that within Mayor had also secured funding from the Combined Authority for additional street wardens, so the profile of the Police, PSCO's and street wardens would be increased across Middlesbrough. The Panel were pleased to note that the Neighbourhood Officers would not just be placed within the key areas where crime, anti -social behaviour and community cohesion was seen as a problem. The Director of Environment and Commercial Services advised the Panel that there were developments in introducing locality working within North Ormesby and Newport . The Panel therefore requested that an update on this be provided at a future meeting as a way of understanding future partnership, local level working.

The second phase of improvement to community cohesion had been the introduction of the Community Engagement Team within Cleveland Police. The team consisted of 1 Sergeant, 2 x Constables, 2 x PCSO's and 2 x Community and Diversity Officers. The main remit of the team is to reach out to every community in Middlesbrough (all of Teesside) to build a better relationship and learn about their dynamics, concerns, their needs and their demands.

The introduction of the Neighbourhood Officers and the Engagement team came from HMI inspection report which advised that as a force they do not engage and do not listen to our communities.

The work of the Engagement Team was very exciting due to the diverse community within Middlesbrough and across Teesside. The Chief Inspection admitted that there were section of the community which the Police were unaware of, however the role of the Community Engagement Team was to visit those communities, build a rapport and listen to them. The Police would work closely with local councillors, partners from the Community Safety Teams within the Council and neighbouring local authorities.

There were also plans to reinstate the Safer Community Partnership, which would provide a platform to discuss issues within the community with all key partner agencies on Board. The Panel in the past have held the Safer Middlesbrough Partnership to account and look forward to receiving further updates once this has been established.

The Chief Inspector also outlined that Cleveland Police would be refreshing the Independent Advisory Groups (IAG) There was a requirement for each Police force across the UK to have an Independent Advisory groups(s). There should be a Strategic Advisory Panel with a number of community Advisory groups which feed to the Strategic level. The Advisory groups exist in Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and there is a Strategic Board, however in the past they have not been representative of the community and therefore a refresh was essential. The IAG acts as a sounding Board for the Police and Police and Crime Commissioner to take issues and seek direction as to the best approach to take e.g. racist graffiti in an area, hate crime etc.

Communication was an essential part to reporting crime and anti-social behaviour and therefore there had been a shift to social media, by way of using twitter and facebook. Quite often members of the community may not feel comfortable ringing the police, but contacting through social media is more convenient.

It was made clear to the Panel, that the steps to improve community cohesion would take time and future updates would be provided as requested. Having more presence in the community was fundamental.

Katherine Corrigan, Cleveland Police Community and Diversity Officer

The Community and Diversity Officer outlined that when she initially started working in the Engagement Team her focus was purely on the refugee and asylum seeker community, but had now broadened to include all strands of diversity. The role is a civilian role (no uniform required) and makes links with the community/ voluntary sector and will be passed referrals from partner agencies where a home visit is required to understand their concerns and break down barriers.

Results from the home visits and conversations have been positive, and if necessary and after trust is made, the officer will invite the specialist officer to investigate a case if required. Quite often communities have lost trust in the Police, so one part of the Engagement Team is to regain trust and loyalty.

The officer outlined that the team is extremely supportive of all communities and wants to ensure they are heard and feel valued. The look to ensure communities are aware who the key contacts are within the police, Neighbourhood Policing, PCSO's etc.

As well as the excellent work being undertaken by Cleveland Police, they work closely with the Police and Crime Commissioners Office. The Panel, lastly heard from Sarah Wilson Commissioner's Officer for Consultation and Engagement and Jenni Salkeld OPCC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager

Sarah Wilson Commissioner's Officer for Consultation and Engagement

The Officer outlined that she worked for the Police and Crime Commissioner to ensure all communities are engaged within across Cleveland . The Police and Crime Commissioner was passionate in ensuring that all voices are heard and operates a 'Your Force, Your Voice' initiative which aims to engage with communities across all areas of Cleveland, with additional targeting of specific 'hard to hear' groups who may otherwise be underrepresented, for example, refugees and asylum seekers, through the Regional Refugee Forum and the LGB&T community, through Hart Gables.

The Police and the Police and Crime Commissioners Office are held to account by several scrutiny mechanisms including a Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel. The stop and search function can be seen to disproportionately impact some sectors of the community, including young people and the BAME community. For this reason, the office has a Young Person's Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel and a BAME Stop & Search Scrutiny Panel, both of which look at anonymised cases of stop and search and provide advice as to how stops could have been better conducted and whether they are seen as justified by the community. Some years ago the Government announced that stop and search was being overused, which led to a

sharp decline in its use. Work is ongoing in Cleveland to increase the targeted use of stop and search. Frontline officers have undergone training on the correct use of this function, as it needs to be used under the correct circumstances, be lawful and proportional.

The Police and Crime Commissioner further attends community events, such as the MELA , where there is a diverse community present. The OPCC team will hold a stall explaining about community safety and this provides an opportunity to talk to the community and this helps us design our services e.g surrounding knife crime.

Jenni Salkeld OPCC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager

The Panel heard that the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager was lead for a programme called Everyone Matters. This was a new team, which consists of 5 officers, two Managers and 3 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officers.

The Manager had currently only been in post for 6 weeks, however advised that the work undertaken by the team would look to programme change management approach around Cleveland's people, partners and communities.

Everyone Matters was introduced by the Police and Crime Commissioner, however it has been reconfigured and developed since the recommendations made by HMIC. There is a service improvement team looking at the recommendations, and examining which have a link to equality, diversity and inclusion. The team are looking at best practice in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion in policing. There was guidance from the National Chiefs Council, one of which outlines the importance of ensuring our teams have good data on our communities' e.g. geo-demographic information which can create community profiles. A joined up, collaborative approach was essential to ensuring the best for our communities.

The Panel applauded the work planned within the force towards community cohesion and welcomed the reintroduction of Neighbourhood officers.

AGREED:

- **That the information presented at the meeting be considered in the context of the scrutiny panel's investigation.**
- **That a future update relating to the Safer Middlesbrough Partnership and Neighbourhood policing be brought to a meeting of the Panel.**

5

UPDATE FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

The Chair provided a verbal update in respect to matters discussed at the Overview and Scrutiny board on 9 January 2020.

Agreed- That the update be noted