

Police and Crime Board, 3rd June 2020 13:00 – 17:00

Venue: Meeting to be held via Skype

Attendees:

- **Police and Crime Commissioner**
- **Chief Constable**
- **Deputy Chief Constable**
- **Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner**
- **Director of People and Organisation Development**
- **OCC CFO**
- **OPCC Interim CEO**
- **OPCC Head of Commissioning and Partnerships**
- **OPCC Strategic Planning and Performance Officer**
- **Deputy Director of Transformation and Improvement**
- **Governance Manager**

To support the carrying out of the PCC's statutory functions including overseeing delivery of the Police and Crime Plan, being the forum for formal decision making by the PCC and otherwise allowing for the PCC to scrutinise the work, performance, key projects and budget of the Constabulary and other partners.

AGENDA

1. Apologies

ACC Cullen
Director of People and Organisation
Governance Manager

2. Minutes

3. Chief Constable's Update (any risks or issues that the Chief Constable wishes to raise)

4. Key Organisational Risks and Issues (CV19 - focus on CJ system; easing restrictions; DA; CV19 related funding issues)

5. Performance against Police and Crime Plan

- a. Performance Overview
- b. Assurance report - impact of Covid-19 on performance and investigative standards of Serious and Major, Vulnerability and Priority Crimes between 1st Feb 2020 – 14th Apr 2020

6. Finance:

- a. Annual Treasury Management Report
- b. Annual Accounts – update on draft and reserves

7. People and Organisational Development

- a. Monthly People and Organisational Development Verbal Update
- b. Well being - Covid Pulse survey

8. Major Projects:

- a. Highlight Report
- b. ICT redesign – for approval
- c. T&I redesign
- d. Info governance review

9. A.O.B

- a. ASCEND Update
- b. Op Remedy Review – paper to follow

10. Action Update

11. Publication (agree any items for publication other than the Minutes and Decision Notices)

Date of the Next Meeting: 1st July 2020, 13:00 – 17:00

DRAFT Minutes of the Police and Crime Board, 3rd June 2020

Held via Skype

Attendees:

Sue Mountstevens, Police and Crime Commissioner
Andy Marsh, Chief Constable
Sarah Crew, Deputy Chief Constable
Mark Simmonds, OPCC Interim CEO
John Smith, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner
Stephen Cullen, Assistant Chief Constable
Nick Adams, OCC CFO
Superintendent Deryck Rees
Karen Michael-Cox, Deputy Director Transformation and Improvement
Marc Hole, OPCC Head of Commissioning and Partnerships
Ben Valentine, OPCC Strategic Planning and Performance Officer
Nick Ridout, Governance Officer
Alaina Davies, Resources Officer

1. Apologies

Director of People and Organisation
Governance Manager

2. Opening Comments

The Board discussed the incident which took place in Bristol last week, the community reaction and community engagement activity which has since taken place.

In relation to Covid-19 the possible release, by the Government, of Regional R numbers was discussed. It was noted that this region started from a lower base position so a relative increase would not be surprising.

3. Minutes and Action Update

The Board agreed the minutes from the Police and Crime Board Meeting held on 6th May 2020.

4. Chief Constable's Update

The Chief Constable highlighted the following concerns:

- Public confidence, particularly within the BAME community, following the terrible death of George Floyd in America.
- Disproportionality in relation to Covid-19 restrictions – the Constabulary have monitored this from day 1. The Constabulary have been open and transparent in sharing data and Body Worn Video footage with the Scrutiny of Police Powers Panel. The Constabulary are now analysing

the reasons for this disproportionality but it is likely to be as a result of hotspot areas. The Constabulary would like to be open and transparent in releasing figures with a commentary providing explanation – the Constabulary is disappointed in the figures given the work that has gone into policing restrictions in a fair and proportionate way. As well as the scrutiny work the Scrutiny of Police Powers Panel have carried out it was also noted that the Constabulary have been working with communities offering “walkabouts” in response to concerns. The PCC was assured that the Professional Standards Department (PSD) are making sure that the disproportionality and use of force figures published on the website are up to date.

- Covid-19 situation and uncertainty – public behaviour, effective quarantine and track & trace. Protests are being planned but the Government are asking that no more than six people outside of a household mix.

5. Key Organisational Risks and Issues

The Constabulary provided updates on the questions around the four areas of concern highlighted in the report which are Criminal Justice Service, Domestic Abuse, Recovery and Finance.

Criminal Justice Service (CJS)

The fortnightly Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) was held yesterday. The PCC recognised the hard work the Constabulary are doing to try and resolve issues – the Chief Constable’s ambition is for Avon and Somerset to become an example of good practice as a result of this work. Updates from the HMCTS were concerning, particularly around the timescales they are estimating to get through the backlogs – need a more accurate sense of how long this will take. It was noted that at a National level there is discussion about setting up Nightingale Courts.

Clarity is needed from the HMCTS around what their requirements are to move forward and resolve issues. The PCC will be raising concerns and issues at a National level. The Chief Constable will be asking the HMCTS for a graphic setting out the time delay, demand and effect. The Constabulary are really focusing efforts on ensuring good file quality and have a project team working on this.

The Constabulary reported that the CPS are broadly supportive of improvement works and have agreed 23 recommendations at their Strategic Board – the Constabulary feel more assured that the CPS are committed to resourcing appropriately now. The PCC confirmed that she is keeping the APCC updated and that OPCC Senior Leaders are in talks about the best way to maximise the role of the PCC in driving improvements.

Domestic Abuse (DA)

The OPCC are focusing on the Extraordinary funding for DA from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) which is being routed through the OPCC.

The Constabulary lead gave an update. The Covid-19 pandemic has been a catalyst for focus on DA work. There has been more collaborative and joined up partnership working – partnership meetings on a fortnightly basis. DA Cells created have given a tactical delivery focus.

The increase in demand follows changes which were made and it was noted that there has never been more work done in this area by the Local Authorities than now. Referrals are up and the next piece of work is to understand this increase.

The Criminal Justice delays during the Covid-19 pandemic are frustrating as the Constabulary report that they were on track to deliver improved referrals to the CPS prior lock down.

It was noted that DVPO levels have been maintained through the lock down period and Legal Services have been effective in ensuring this.

The OPCC queried if the re-starting of Night time economy is thought to have the potential to increase DA demand. Night time economy is a proportionally small DA driver – the peak time for DA demand is between 21:00 – 22:00.

It was noted that more DA related arrests were made in May 2020 and response times were improved.

The OPCC queried the outputs from the work the Constabulary have been doing around outstanding DA offenders. New DA Single Points of Contacts (SPOCs) have been introduced to give a push to this work. The Constabulary reported that the number of outstanding offenders has reduced to 230.

In terms of Out of Court Disposals the Constabulary are going to be looking at how they use ASCEND workers. They will also be looking at whether they have fully utilised CARA and Project SHE during this period.

The Constabulary are looking at Victimless (evidence led) prosecutions in order to future proof against the CJS backlog, which is likely to prompt victims to withdraw from the process.

The Constabulary are working on a product which will provide intelligence on vulnerable victims for Neighbourhood Teams to understand the local picture.

DA is an important issue for the OPCC and the Constabulary are asked to keep the OPCC informed of anything else that partners could do to drive improvement. The data and intelligence picture was discussed – there are currently different qualities of data across organisations and this needs to be addressed. It was noted that DA is a societal issue which the police cannot change alone and must be tackled with a partnership approach. There were issues with MARAC in terms of bringing partners together.

The DA lead confirmed that he is working with the Neighbourhoods lead regarding the PCSO work as part of the Think Family project and how this links

in with the DA work. The DA lead will coordinate this work and advocate what works. He will liaise with the OPCC so that discussions can be raised at partnership meetings regarding the focus of the Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs).

Finance

The impact on the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) of the Covid-19 pandemic was discussed. Negative impacts include loss of income and potential lower Council Tax collection rates – Council Tax growth, rate and base will be affected. The effect of Government borrowing was discussed. The Constabulary will have to revisit all assumptions the MTFP is based on. It is of paramount importance to look at ways to save and invest to meet future financial pressures and create (non debt based) funds to invest in technology.

The PCC asked that when remodelling the MTFP the Constabulary include a model with no increase to the Council Tax precept. The PCC urged caution when expanding ensuring to choose investments carefully – the Constabulary assured the PCC that they are alive to this and they understand that the PCC needs to continue to be robust in challenging the Constabulary on behalf of the Avon and Somerset tax payers.

The potential deficit for 2020/21 would largely be as a result of loss of income which would be managed through draw down of reserves – the loss of income related to events should be short term. The OCC CFO informed the Board that the Quarter 1 performance should not show a concerning position due to not being able to fill as many vacancies at the start of the year as planned due to lock down. It was noted that there is no Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) planned for another year and having no clear multi-year plan for funding is challenging.

A pay award of 3% per annum was assumed but this will be unlikely now. Risks were also discussed relating to pension deficit, inflation assumption and exposure to risk of any reduction in partners funding. However, the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the value of public services.

The PCC was assured that the Constabulary have a Strategic Planning meeting scheduled tomorrow and will look at the risks and the scale of savings that might be required. The Constabulary will look at the five year horizon and start to re-profile. Any investment decisions have to enable the organisation to get through the period and support areas of greatest risk. It was again highlighted that the decision made to invest in technology has enabled the organisation to effectively continue to operate during the Covid-19 restrictions. It is important to invest in technology in a spend to save and be efficient approach – reserves will fund this investment.

£83m has been taken out of the organisation in the last 10 years but this has carried risk to the organisation of savings which are not sustainable. The Constabulary recognise the need to be more intelligent about identifying saving going forward.

The Covid-19 restrictions have created the opportunity to embrace the digital technology and the organisation now needs to consider how to take this forward and if there are savings that can be made from fully maximising this technology. Adapting to these new ways of working has shown that geographical working location is no longer relevant.

It was noted that a new OPCC CFO has been appointed. The OCC CFO has been carrying out both roles on a short term basis and the OPCC thanked him for doing a brilliant job in the interim.

6. Performance against the Police and Crime Plan

a) Performance Overview

The DPCC congratulated the Constabulary on their Control Room performance. The DPCC queried why the attendance rate at Priority High calls percentage was lower. The Constabulary have responded well to the Immediate and Priority Standard calls. Priority High calls have been a challenge and Covid-19 breaches have been a factor in this – this is now improving as reports of Covid-19 breaches decrease. Part of the demand work the Constabulary is doing will look at the SLA around Priority High calls. The Constabulary will look at a number of other forces and their core grading and National best practice – the Constabulary will be proposing changes to core grading.

There are still a number of challenges in policing the Covid-19 restrictions and many in the organisation continue to work from home. The challenge of managing staff coming back into offices too early will need to be managed strategically. The guidance remains that those who can work from home should continue to do so.

The DPCC asked if better positive outcomes were expected. The Constabulary are seeing a positive trend and they have improved but are working hard to keep going in the right direction. Need to understand if Out of Court Disposals (OoCD) are being maximised and also this links to the work on interactions with the CPS.

The OPCC CEO commented on the positive improvement reported on Data Quality, which is a really important area. Have the Constabulary benchmarked against other forces? This is going to be discussed at the Strategic Planning meeting tomorrow.

The PCC raised concerns that the backlogs and time delays relating to the CJS might impact on officers and public confidence. The PCC was assured that arrests have not gone down and the Constabulary don't anticipate this being an issue which would affect officer behaviour.

It was noted that the victim satisfaction data available is prior to the Covid-19 restrictions and it is not yet known how this will have affected victim satisfaction.

The PCC sought assurance that the frontline officers being used to run the Remand Virtual Courts were not just coming from Op Remedy. The Constabulary confirmed that this is now being shared out.

b) Assurance Report – impact of Covid-19 on performance and investigation standards of Serious and Major, Vulnerability and Priority Crimes between 1st Feb 2020 – 14th Apr 2020

The PCC queried the reason for the 15.8% increase in DA crime. Result of the flagging work and not related to Covid-19. Avon and Somerset is in line with the national direction which is tracking up for DA incidents. It was noted that Domestic Crime is now settling back to pre Covid-19 levels.

The PCC was assured that cases which are filed are looked at again to ensure this was an appropriate action – this makes sure vulnerable victims are not missed. The Constabulary is also planning to do this for volume crimes as a reassurance exercise but this needs to focus on quality of service to the victims and how they are supported. The PCC would like some dip-sampling done for independent assurance to the OPCC – the OPCC are already liaising with Transformation and Improvement to look at what can be done within the resources.

7. Finance:

a. Annual Treasury Management Report

No issues to report. The Treasury Management Strategy was agreed at the last meeting of the Police and Crime Board. Operated within the prudential indicators. Borrowing to fund estates projects. No counterparty issues reported. Need to keep a close eye on the situation with regard to a recession.

The PCC queried the investment in the property fund and whether this should be reviewed. The PCC was advised that this is a longer term investment and the investment interest rate is currently exceeding expectations. The capital value would currently be more of a concern so it is not recommended that this be reviewed at this time.

The OCC CFO advised that the key point in section 5 relates to the £5m increase in borrowing room planned for 2020/21. The average rate on new borrowing has come down. Short term investments are up year on year. Counterparty – the advice is 35 days for new deposits so the ones that were 95 days are being managed down to achieve compliance.

b. Annual Accounts – update on draft and reserves

Production of the Annual Accounts is behind as staff from the Finance Department had to manage closing whilst working from home in lock down and all the additional challenges that lock down brought, such as childcare

issues and home schooling. Staff have recently been issued with second screens to help them better manage working from home. Production is 3-4 weeks behind but will be drafted and online on 19th June 2020, which is well before the Joint Audit Committee on 8th July 2020. The OCC CFO has a session booked in with the Joint Audit Committee (JAC) members to go through the accounts. JAC questions and answers will then be published in the usual way along with the papers for the Joint Audit Committee.

It was noted that the OPCC request for a recovery fund following the Covid-19 pandemic will reduce to the Commissioners Community Action Fund (CCAF) fund level of £200k. This is due to extraordinary funding the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) are making available. The OPCC are currently in the process of bidding for this funding which will be almost £600k to support providers at this time.

The OPCC CEO thanked the Finance Team for the work they are doing and noted that the Accounts will still be produced well within the extended timeframe given for production of the accounts.

8. People and Organisational Development

a. People and Organisational Development Update

The Constabulary face challenges in relation to recruitment across all areas. The recent advert for Police Staff Investigators saw a return of 1200 applications which the Constabulary are in the process of sifting through. The PCC queried if this would fill the additional 75 Police Staff Investigator posts funded by the Council Tax precept increase – any appointed on a Scale 6 will be part of the 75.

More applications are being seen across the board with a lot of people wanting to join the organisation. E-recruitment opens this week and will provide a positive experience for those applying for roles. It was noted that the Constabulary have been recognised through the Employer Network and been nominated for a neurodiversity award.

Working to close the gap on PCSO recruitment. Need more training spaces to be available which is difficult with social distancing rules but the Constabulary are working on solutions.

Police Officer recruitment was discussed. There are no transferees being taken at the moment. The Constabulary are looking at the Degree Holder Apprenticeship route. Moving in the right direction. It was noted that fewer officers left the organisation in April 2020 than expected. The trajectory is to achieve Establishment by the end on 20/21 but this will be monitored weekly.

The PCC raised concerns about the driver training course. The PCC was assured that all PCDA officers will be trained to drive general purpose vehicles. In terms of Response trained drivers the team are awaiting advice

from Response as to what percentage they think should be trained in order to try and move towards this.

b. Wellbeing – Covid Pulse Survey

With the wellbeing of staff and officers being a high priority the Constabulary decided to run a pulse survey looking at: wellbeing; being informed; having the right tools to do the job; and what more could be done to support staff and officers. The survey was turned around quickly and the Constabulary have been quick to act on the results to ensure that it is clear the Constabulary have heard the issues, understood the issues and are working on solutions.

It was clear from the results that the investment in digital technology came at the right time and has been a real benefit. It is positive that 54% completed the survey which is up from 46% completing the last annual survey. 94% felt communicated with, 78% felt that the organisation cares about wellbeing and 75% felt they had the tools to do their jobs. It was noted that staff responses were higher than the force average, with home workers being in much higher agreement – there were comments from officers regarding vehicle cleanliness and potentially availability of PPE early on may have affected officer response.

The survey asked people to select 3 words from a list to describe how they were feeling which created a word cloud. Where concerning words were picked, such as anxious, the Constabulary are drilling down on this to try and help.

There were verbatim comments suggesting that people are nervous about coming back to offices. People will continue to work from home with appropriate people coming back as and when it is safe and necessary to do so.

9. Major Projects:

a. Highlight Report

The OPCC CEO asked for an update on the increase in costs in relation to Yeovil and timescales? The OCC CFO gave an estimate of the increased cost and the work he is doing to understand these costs and how they came about. The PCC was assured that these cost have not yet been agreed and once understood a recommendation will be put before the PCC (at Police and Crime Board if the timing allows) before a decision is made.

The PCC was assured that online assessments centres will be starting later in June 2020 as part of the planned recruitment.

b. ICT Redesign

The ICT Redesign is set in the context of increased demand, complexity, pace of change, cost and public/partner/employee expectation. The Covid-19 pandemic has made digital working the default position.

The Redesign will increase capacity, develop capability and elevate maturity. It will solve the Southwest One legacy, improve IT performance, manage financial and technological efficiencies, avoid costs and enable savings. The growth in the business case was detailed.

While it is recognised that efficiency and productivity is hard to measure the OPCC CEO highlighted the need for a robust benefits tracker. The opportunity to annual benchmark IT maturity was discussed. The PCC was assured that this business case aligns with the National direction and the Director of Information Technology holds the regional seat on the Police Technology Council so is very informed. It was noted that this will be funded from future savings.

The Police and Crime Board approved Option A, as set out in the Information Technology Directorate Business Case. It was noted that this business case has also been discussed at the Programme Board and Constabulary Management Board.

c. Transformation and Improvement Redesign

There is a lot more work to be done to support the aims set out in the Information Technology Business Case and the Information Management Business Case. The department is currently working on the gaps and does not propose growth but an additional £22k in case more capacity is needed. This is a starting point which aims to radically improve the service offer. Need to align to the four force strategies and be clear on the role of the department, responsibilities, management and reporting. This will be a restructure to create three new teams.

The Police and Crime Board approved this Business Case along with the other two presented today. It is important to track the benefits of all three Business Cases presented today and ensure savings pay for them.

d. Information Governance Review

A thorough and detailed review of Information Governance has been conducted, highlighting areas of non-compliance and making recommendations to address these supported by the correct resources. The risks and consequences of non-compliance were set out for the Board. The new posts and growth were detailed and the risks of not making this investment highlighted. It was noted that the current team have been overwhelmed with work.

The OPCC raised concerns that there are so many areas of non-compliance after the Constabulary Information Management (CIM) review. Assurances were given by people who have now left the organisation but the Constabulary are looking to address these areas of non-compliance since identified.

The Police and Crime Board agreed the preferred Option as set out in the Information Management Business Case.

10.A.O.B

ASCEND Update

Positive position. The PCC was assured that the Out of Court Disposal cases have not dropped, as suggested by the information in the report, there are just a significant number pending. The Covid-19 restrictions provided the opportunity to introduce virtual interventions. There are no resourcing issues to report at this time. During the Covid-19 restrictions changes have been made in order to maintain the service throughout.

There are a number of things in the pipeline such as intervention with the 18-24 year old cohort, work around assault on emergency workers and knife crime.

The recommendations should be reviewed after a more detailed review later this month. The Evaluation being carried out will be important to inform the decision about future funding.

It was noted that Deferred Prosecutions are being looked at and how they link together with ASCEND to extend the opportunities. Need to link in with other leads and look at this holistically. The OPCC will discuss with relevant leads.

Op Remedy Review

Learning has taken place following the mid-term evaluation. Performance against the 3 elements was discussed (residential burglary, knife crime and drug crime). The Constabulary is now solving 8% of residential burglaries which is up from 4% and has seen the force go from 32 to twelfth nationally. 16-18% of outcomes are Op Remedy.

Discussed getting the cascading of learning from Op Remedy right. There have been excellent results but the communication needs to improve.

Knife crime was a significant part of investment – prevention work. This is an area for development.

In terms of the drugs work there has been significant activity, particularly in relation to County Lines. Examples of drugs and cash being seized were given. Also examples where the arrest of one individual led to a wider network.

This work was made possible as a result of the investment made by the PCC from the increase in the Council Tax precept. This investment in proactive capability has produced significant results.

There are a number of recommendations in the paper highlighting areas for improvement. One of these areas is working with partners in Neighbourhoods Teams – Op Remedy are linking in with the Neighbourhood Lead regarding this.

It was noted that Op Remedy have been operating with 80% establishment – even more could be achieved with full establishment.

The Deputy Chief Constable explained that the Futures Programme would decide on the Operational Blueprint going forward. This will include incorporating a proactive capability informed by the learning gained and positive working practices of Op Remedy.

The OPCC raised concerns that Op Remedy have not been as active in certain parts of the force and are keen that it be understood within the organisation that Op Remedy is force wide. The Board was assured that the Covid-19 pandemic has not impacted on the capacity of Op Remedy.

Need to share a similar update with the Police and Crime Panel. It was noted that the academic report will soon be available. The OPCC thanked Op Remedy for their work.

11. Action Update

An update was given on the actions from the previous Police and Crime Board Meetings as follows:

- Liberty Report Response – the PCC received an update report on recommendation in response to the Liberty Report.
- Written update was given on the number of Response trained drivers.
- Written update was given on work being done to tackle repeat Hate Crime Offenders.
- Written update given on the work to look at what other forces are doing in relation to deferred prosecutions.

12. Publication

The following items were agreed for publication:

- 6th May 2020 Police and Crime Board Agenda
- 6th May 2020 Police and Crime Board Minutes
- 2019-20 Revenue and Capital Finance Performance

Actions List:

See Exempt Actions List

Date of the Next Meeting: 1st July 2020