



## **Governance and Scrutiny Board agenda – 13 February 2025 13:00-14:30 and 15:00-16:30**

**Venue: Port-Oyns Room, Police HQ and Microsoft Teams**

### **Attendees:**

Clare Moody, Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)  
Sarah Crew, Chief Constable (CC)  
Jon Reilly, Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)  
Alice Ripley, OPCC Chief of Staff  
Paul Butler, OPCC Chief Finance Officer (CFO)  
Sally Fox, OPCC Director of Performance and Accountability  
Ben Valentine, OPCC Senior Performance and Governance Manager  
James Davis, ASP Portfolio Delivery Manager  
Vicky Ellis, Secretariat Manager (Minutes)

### **Partial meeting attendance:**

Nick Adams, ASP Chief Finance Officer  
George Headley, Superintendent, Head of Strategic Planning and Change  
Nick Lilley, Director of Information Technology  
Roger Doxsey, Superintendent Crime Prevention  
Kirstie Morgan, Detective Chief Inspector, Integrated Offender Management  
Jon Dowey, Head of Performance and Insight

### **1 Apologies - None received**

### **2 Minutes and Action Updates**

The Minutes of the January Governance and Scrutiny Board were agreed as an accurate record for publication.

The Board discussed the actions due for an update at the meeting:

- Action 069/23 – there had been no further issues reported regarding the problem with callers being unable to hear the call handlers. The vetting had been completed for the supplier to undertake the checking of the network and the work was due to commence on Monday 17 February.
- Action 69/24 – In relation to the case management system there was one task outstanding which was the integration of the icase forms. While it was taking some time to resolve due to technical issues the board agreed the action could be closed.

### **3 Finance**

#### **a) Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)**

The Board formally accepted the MTFP following the decision agreed at the Police and Crime Panel on 4 February 2025 to increase the Policing Precept by £14 as proposed by the PCC.

The Board reflected on the discussions about the report at the Panel meeting, notably the challenges around how ASP will deliver the budget and how they will identify their savings plans. The formal response to the precept had not yet been received by the PCC from the Panel but it was anticipated there would be some recommendations included.

The Board reflected on the benefit of the work undertaken through the year to ensure the Panel had all the information necessary for their decision. The query about Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) being conducted on savings was seen as a good challenge from the Panel and would be picked up in discussions between the CFOs. The approach taken to manage vacancies through natural attrition hadn't forced the use of an EIA in the same way as any alternative approach would have done. The Board discussed the reduction in PCSO's as an example and whether ASP understood the attritional impact on individual areas.

Another area of concern discussed at the Panel was overtime and the Board noted this is a very complex position with lots of reasons for overtime such as to provide backfill for abstraction or absences. ASP advised they had not yet tightened the controls around overtime, once this was done in the next financial year there would be a change seen in the amount of overtime undertaken. ASP were working to understand what had been planned overtime and what was unplanned, so they can more accurately budget. It was noted some overspend from the current year would be recoverable for one off events. Savings had been identified that should be delivered following shift changes.

The Panel had also asked whether ASP were maximising income opportunities. The Board noted that policing has restrictions in place for charges they can make, which differ to those for Local Authorities. The Board agreed it would be good to consider any opportunities for charging such as shared services for training and any collaboration agreements to assure they were not missing any opportunities or disproportionate spread of costs.

The Board discussed the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee. ASP had received £4.6m to spend in 2025/26 and following feedback from police forces last week the grant conditions had been reviewed and reissued. ASP provided an update on the work they were undertaking to meet the conditions of the grant and the recruitment they would need to do. A team of 59 officers, 12 Sergeants and 1 Inspector had been identified to provide the new neighbourhood policing teams. Two cohorts had been identified from Police Now to provide 36 of the required new recruits.

The PCC formally thanked the ASP team for their support with the MTFP and at the Panel meetings.

## **b) Q3 Financial Performance Report**

The Board noted the Q3 Financial Performance Report, which provided information on the financial performance in a very clear way. The PCC would have raised the same points as those already raised under the MTFP item above.

## **4 Chief Constable's Update**

The Chief Constable highlighted four key events from the past week:

- Precept decision at the Police and Crime Panel
- The Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee
- The publication of the Avon and Somerset HMICFRS PEEL Report
- The completion of the Leadership Time events within ASP

These events fed into her looking to the future. There's a vision in place through the police and crime plan which sets the strategy and imperatives. The Operating Model work, the change in the performance framework and the leadership pivot to refocus on looking to the frontline, was all work that would support achieving the plan.

The Chief Constable acknowledged there would be a revisit from the HMICFRS to review progress against Areas For Improvement (AFI) in the ICAT and DVDS teams. ASP were looking at the management of offenders and have plans in place to address the AFI's quickly.

ASP were in a good place in relation to responding to the public. The work in relation to force leadership is about the operating model and accountability. The change of the performance framework focuses on outcomes. Project Bright Light will help improve ASP's response to Domestic Abuse.

For 2025/26 the Chief Constable is thinking about change at pace but with care. ASP are focusing on Evidence Based Policing and are engaging with academics to support this work. She was keen to consider how they can influence beyond ASP and as part of this she met with editors from across the force area yesterday, talking them through similar themes as those shared with the Police and Crime Panel. She had opened the Minerva conference – seeking to have influence through that mechanism also. Interviewed yesterday – anticipate some influence there. The Chief Constable was looking to share the difficult choices and consequences policing was facing and wanted to be clear what it was ASP would be asking for, as she was building platform from which to make the ask from.

There had been a 15.7% increase in crime in ASP and there is a baseline to measure from now – if ASP are successfully preventing crime it will be possible to see improvement through the data.

The Board discussed the need to communicate and share the good news stories when progress is made against the AFIs. It was anticipated progress would be seen when the Inspectors returned, possibly in March/April.

A member of the PCC's team had attended one of the Leadership Time events and provided feedback that it had been good to see the consistency of the messaging and how clear the Chief Officer's were being about changes being implemented to create capacity. It had been good to see the link back to the workforce strategy, and the emphasis on people interaction and the importance of holding one to ones with staff.

## **5 Constabulary Change Portfolio**

### **a) Portfolio Highlight Report**

The PCC highlighted three projects that had been given an amber risk status and classed as 'Emerging risks', but the report was unclear what that meant. The Portfolio Delivery Manager advised in all three projects the status related to timescale pressures on the projects. Updated

timelines for the projects would be provided to the PCC when they were finalised and future reports would include the causes of amber status as well as any consequences (costs or otherwise) due to any delays.

The PCC expressed the need to understand the Evidence Based Investigative Tool in more detail ahead of the submission of the final business case to the next GSB, particularly seeking further information on the algorithms. ASP confirmed it was an advisory tool and would be used to support investigators in decision making. Indicative findings from forces already using it had been positive. The PCC stated her expectation that the business case would include an equality impact assessment.

ASP confirmed they had submitted a STAR bid for Bright Light Funding and confirmation of any allocation would be provided on 10 March.

### **b) Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)**

The Board had received a written update on the ERP project. Negotiations continued with the provider. The monthly costs had been reduced by reducing the use of external contractors in the programme. A business continuity tabletop exercise and event had been scheduled involving representatives from IT and other areas with the contingency planning team to understand the risks of the legacy system. The event would consider what would happen if there was a two week outage of SAP. It would then reflect on any additional mitigations required.

Market engagement had commenced to understand potential delivery partner suitability. A much clearer understanding of costs was anticipated by the end of April. The project team had documented all the lessons learned and would share them with the PCC. Specific points from the learning had informed the questions ASP were asking potential suppliers.

### **c) Geographic Operating Model**

The Board received an oral update from the Head of Strategic Planning and Change, who outlined the progress of the programme so far and the planned governance over the coming months.

Programme 1 was focussed on patrol and neighbourhood policing. A rapid action team had reviewed the findings of workshops with 200 members of ASP, focusing on leadership structures and operational interdependencies with partners. Engagement had been across all directorates. Two pieces of work had emerged from these engagements – the geographic model which was looking at the restructuring of teams and boundaries. Currently ASP has 8 areas that don't match across neighbourhood policing and response and are looking to align the boundaries and understand the complexity that comes from that, for example radio masts and the structure behind. There is a wider interdependency to the leadership structure to support the work. This was a short to medium term piece of work that works towards the

operating model but isn't an operating model. The options paper on the structural elements would be presented to ASP's Portfolio Steering Board (PSB) meeting in March.

The Operating Model work is at the concept report stage and is a more holistic view across the organisation. It is not just a restructuring and extends beyond the front line teams. The project team were creating a capability map, looking to identify efficiencies to be considered in the programme. The concept report was expected to be presented to ASP's PSB in February. The Chief Constable advised she had highlighted to the team the need to maximise the use of technology as they develop the work – digital and transformation need to work much closer together. ASP were involving officers to work as peers in the engagement and consultation.

## **6 PEEL Question – How good is the force at managing offenders and suspects?**

This PEEL question relates to Priorities 2, 3 & 5 from the Police and Crime Plan.

Managing Offenders and Suspects has been graded as 'Requires Improvement' in the PEEL 2023-25 assessment. This is the same grade as in the previous PEEL (2021/22) assessment however the AFIs have now changed and increased by 1.

There were 4 Areas for Improvement identified:

1. The constabulary should improve its governance and approach to managing suspects and wanted people.
2. The constabulary should make sure that it has processes and resources in place to visit registered sex offenders and manage the risk posed by them.
3. The constabulary should make sure that its internet child abuse team can manage images of online child abuse in line with nationally recognised risk assessment timescales, and that supervisors regularly review officers' caseloads.
4. The constabulary should make sure that it continually risk assesses any backlogs in online child abuse referrals and cases awaiting enforcement action, and that bail checks and intelligence refreshes take place following enforcement action.

The PCC asked what ASP saw as the biggest challenges for delivering performance in this area.

The key challenge in the Internet Child Abuse Team (ICAT) was considered the makeup of the team, it was a hard place to work. There had been high levels of referrals into the team – 100 a month and this is expected to double over the next year. There had been insufficient officers in the team previously and the biggest challenge was bringing more staff in. ASP had refreshed the leadership team and were considering options on how to improve the working environment for that team. They now also needed additional officers to join to categorise the referrals. ASP had been supplementing the team with additional officers to support with warrants and interviews, these officers had working through the outstanding list and ASP were looking at how to manage this sustainably. The numbers were starting to reduce, and they were discussing workflow, ensuring there was a clear plan for sustainability. They had met with the College of Policing recently and had been advised that some forces use computers to grade images and this work looked promising and was being explored by ASP. The ICAT were due

to brief the Chief Officer Group on process mapping and the way forward. They were focussing on removing those that were outside the time limits. They had been creating the ability to move resources in to the team to deal with a surge in referrals and then returning the officers to CID when the surge had been addressed. It was noted there will also be a delay with digital forensics following the seizures of devices. It was also being explored whether there was the option to stop going through devices once there was enough evidence to charge and convict an offender.

The DCI for the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) team provided a presentation to the Board on work relating to the Area for Improvement on Registered Sex Offenders (RSO's). The team had seen an increase of 10 Offender Managers who were just finishing their course. There had been a significant increase in the numbers of RSO's living in the force area over the last 3 years and the outstanding visit rate has decreased. The team were working to reduce that further, to below 10% and were planning how to get to the 5% expected by HMICFRS. The team predicted it will take 6 months to reach that 5% figure but have some items in place and are aiming to accelerate that. As long as HMICFRS see improvements in the figure they would be satisfied at their revisit.

It was noted RSO's are singly managed and there are a number of recommendations from the Creedon report that have not been implemented. There are 1000 RSOs that are high risk in ASP. A rising area of demand was requests for people to be removed from the register.

The Superintendent for Crime Prevention advised that where Offender Managers were uncovering further offences committed by RSO's – through improved visits – this increased the investigative workload. The quality of the visits is important for protecting the public.

The Board heard about some initiatives that were seeing success, including Buddi tags, Oxygen and Cleer Speed, as well as the use of digi-dogs to find electronic devices.

The PCC's team highlighted the difficult choice ASP had made to move resources from the IOM team into the Management of Sex Offenders and Violent Offenders (MOSOVO) team and queried what the consequences of this had been. ASP noted that the 4 posts that had been moved into the MOSOVO team had been vacant posts that hadn't yet been filled, but this would limit the future capacity for the team to manage more Domestic Abuse offenders.

It was noted there was an improving trajectory for the progress against the AFI and this would be sustained through the training and uplift to staff in that area.

Predictions indicated that ASP would need to increase the staffing levels by 2 posts each year to be able to keep pace with the increasing demand. ASP would run short term concentrated operations, drawing staff in from other areas to manage demand when needed. ASP were following APP as recommended by HMICFRS.

## **7 Items for Publication**

- Minutes for January GSB

- Q3 Financial Report
- MTFP

#### **A.O.B**

The PCC asked about the ASP aviation strategy. ASP advised they were awaiting the output of the national strategy work on aviation before creating a local strategy.

**Date of the next Governance and Scrutiny Board: 19 March 2025 11:00 - 14:30**