



DORSET POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2019

Present: Mike Short (Chairman), Bobbie Dove (Vice-Chairman), Colin Bungey, Les Fry, Barry Goringe, Iain McVie, Bill Pipe, Molly Rennie and David Taylor

Apologies: Cllrs Mohan Iyengar and Rachel Maidment

Also present: Cllr Mark Anderson and Cllr Tony Trent

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Simon Bullock (Chief Executive, OPCC), Marc Eyre (Service Manager for Assurance), Adam Harrold (Director of Operations), Julie Strange (Chief Finance Officer), Martyn Underhill (Police and Crime Commissioner) and Fiona King (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

34. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mohan Iyengar and Rachel Maidment from Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. Cllrs Mark Anderson and Tony Trent attended as their substitutes.

35. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2019 were confirmed and signed.

Matters Arising

In respect of Minute 23 – Spotlight Scrutiny Reviews – Effectiveness of CCTV, Cllr Rennie advised members that she had recently met with officers at the OPCC and collectively it was agreed it was too early to establish the effectiveness of the new control centre. Initially the PCC had pump primed the project to enable the centre to move from Weymouth to Dorchester. The control centre now covered Weymouth, Dorchester and Bridport. She added that in future the scrutiny exercise might be better placed through the Community Safety Partnership (CSP). Following a question about any possible increase in the hours of cover, the PCC advised they needed to see how it went initially but it was on his radar. Effectiveness of CCTV will be revisited through the Forward Plan.

In respect of Minute 26 – Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Development Plan – it was confirmed that the number of responders in the Pulse survey was 13.5% Police staff, and 15% Police officers. Overall the results were comparable with previous years but the PCC wanted to see more responders. The PCC made reference to 'survey fatigue' experienced by staff and officers

and felt this needed to be recognised. In response to a question from the Vice-Chairman about how he planned to work with the Chief Constable (CC) to make future surveys more meaningful, the PCC noted that this was an operational issue but asked that she write to him regarding this and he would then take this up with the CC.

36. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made at the meeting.

37. Public Participation

There were no statements or questions submitted from Town and Parish Councils.

There were no public statements and questions submitted for this meeting. However, Cllr Les Fry, Dorset Council, asked a question about the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to the PCC. The question and answer are attached as an annexure to these minutes.

Following a question about how the Panel could support the PCC and CC with this issue, the PCC welcomed this offer and advised he would shortly be writing to both Councils for clarification of the position and asked that all members signed a letter of support for this.

One member highlighted the importance of the work of MASH for the people of Dorset and felt that the officer led decision to withdraw from the MASH was linked to the withdrawal of officers from Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (BCP) to the Criminal Justice Board.

Cllr Fry advised that he planned to ask this question at the next full Dorset Council meeting. The Vice-Chairman undertook to work with Cllr Fry to frame a question to both councils.

Resolved

That all members agreed to sign and send letter of support (for the PCC) to the Leaders of both Unitary Councils outlining their concerns. This will be drafted by the Chairman.

38. Police and Crime Plan Monitoring Report

The Panel considered a report informing them of the progress against the Police and Crime Plan and Priorities 2017-2021.

The monitoring report provided information on the financial outturn position for the Q2 period of the year, including updates on the following items which are listed under the relevant pillars:-

Pillar 1 – Protecting People at Risk and Harm – Cllr Mohan Iyengar

The PCC highlighted key areas as set out in the report.

Following a question about what was being done in respect of the reporting of crimes where men were victims of domestic violence, the PCC advised that a lot of these fell within the LGBT community and he worked very closely with this group. He was working hard to get more members to come forward and report crimes. There appeared to be no support service in the straight male space, although it was noted that the Refuge in North Dorset welcomed male victims. One member felt the profile in this regard needed to be raised. The PCC agreed there could be more worthwhile work carried out on this if he was to go forward for a third term. It would of course require more funding. It was suggested to try and raise the profile of this it might be helpful to contact the relevant gay groups/forums as there would be some members there that had contact with straight males.

The Vice-Chairman made reference to hate crime and specifically those people who were disabled and asked when work would be starting in this area. The PCC advised that work was in progress now and he was working with the disabled group trying to encourage disability reporting and build confidence with the disabled. The PCC reminded members that this was not just Police business but also Local Authority business.

Following a recent report on the radio regarding an increase in cyber crime/fraud the PCC advised that he had just completed a survey about action fraud and was due to meet Head of Action Fraud to complain that over 70% of people who had contacted Action Fraud in Dorset were not happy with the service. He felt it was a completely fragmented approach to dealing with fraud in this country.

Pillar 2 - Working with our Communities – Cllr Les Fry and Cllr David Taylor

The PCC highlighted key areas as set out in the report.

In response to a question about the type of accreditations under the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS), the PCC undertook to ask the Police to summarise what the other CSAS accreditations were.

Following a query about video uploads, the PCC undertook to report back to members in February but confirmed that prosecutions had taken place across all three counties. At present these uploads were used just for traffic issues but there was a plan to extend the plan to include anti-social behaviour

In respect of the work being done to address aggressive driving and the use of mobile phones when driving, the PCC made reference to the graduated driver learning which might help to address aggressive driving and endorsed this. With regards to mobile phones, Dorset prosecuted more than other forces, but accepted more needed to be done.

Following a discussion about fly tipping and how this could be resolved, the Chief Executive, OPCC advised that the PCC had funded a role to help address this and the person appointed had recently started in post. The PCC was aiming to fund more covert cameras to try and address fly tipping but recognised there was still a lot of work to be done.

One member made reference to the lack of police attendance sometimes at community engagement events and safer neighbourhood events, and asked if a non police representative could attend if a police officer was unable to attend as these meetings were well attended by members of the public.

Pillar 3 – Supporting Victim, Witnesses and Reducing Reoffending – Cllrs Bill Pipe and Molly Rennie

The PCC highlighted key areas as set out in the report.

Cllr Pipe advised members that this pillar was fairly static at present and the aim was to re-start the work again in the New Year.

In response to a question as to why the Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) indicator was still red as the contract had changed recently, the PCC advised that this was a Government issue and therefore remained red, as the new contract provider had yet to bed in.

Following a discussion about the tagging of offenders, the PCC had agreed to fund GPS tagging a number of years ago and had recently agreed to take on another pilot. The Chairman felt it was maybe a little ambitious to move the indicator to green whilst still at a pilot stage. However, the Chief Executive highlighted the workings of the two pilots and different suppliers advising this was purely a procurement pilot concerning the cost of the tags and the pledge from the PCC was to extend tagging and this had been achieved. In response to a concern about a possible breach in relation to tagging, the PCC advised there was three types of tagging, one of which was monitored by the Probation service, and it was this type of breach that the concern related to. The member felt it might be helpful to reword the commitment to ensure transparency. This was noted, however, it was stated that pledges could not be recorded as they reflected the PCC's pledges on election.

In response to a question from the Chairman about victim satisfaction rates and the work being done to improve this, the PCC advised that this figure was not just for policing but also related to the whole criminal justice system.

Pillar 4 – Transforming for the Future – Iain McVie and Cllr Barry Goringe

The PCC highlighted key areas as set out in the report.

Iain McVie advised the Panel that he was in the process of working on his scrutiny report on Police Bail but due to national activity this had been paused temporarily. The aim was to present it to members at their meeting in February.

In response to a question regarding resolution rates and whether the PCC envisaged them coming 'back into fashion', the PCC advised that he supported the need for more targets in this area. He felt this area of business could be improved and strongly supported bringing this back as a target. Dorset was leading the country on a detection rate of just 14% of crimes which he felt was woefully low.

Following a question about the recent effects in the courts system and whether these have had any impact on the criminal justice system, the PCC advised there were now just two magistrates courts and one crown court for the county. Officers saw delays in prosecutions which was a concern. He added that his biggest concern was regarding domestic violence crimes and the length of time it takes to get to court as this tends to see victims withdraw. Unfortunately, there were tensions everywhere as a result of austerity measures.

In respect of the PCC's commitments 55, 58 and 59 regarding witnesses, Cllr Pipe advised that he was due to meet with the Criminal Justice Board on the issues of using witnesses for video link and would report back to members in February.

The Vice-Chairman made reference to the difficulty of recruiting staff to the Force Control Room and asked how was this being addressed. The Chief Executive, OPCC advised these were comparatively low paid jobs which did include shift allowances, but Winfrith was not easily accessible to all. The OPCC were currently scrutinising the force's plans for looking at opportunities to place control room staff in Bournemouth as well as at Winfrith HQ. A number of vacancies had been carried over during recent months but work was now underway to address this.

Members received an update on the 101 service from Cllr Goringe, which is attached as an appendix to these minutes. Cllr Goringe's update also considered this matter in detail.

Members asked the following financial questions to the PCC:-

- It is noted that adverse variance will be considered at the end of the year for use of revenue. Why is planning not being undertaken now in order to mitigate this requirement?

The current forecast overspend of £214,000 is considered manageable within the context of a £134.7m budget at 0.16% and is an improved position from Quarter 1. The forecast variance includes funds made available to address operational demand arising from critical resourcing issues in the control room. The Force has now set up a Gold group to consider the control room operation and is actively taking steps to reduce spend in areas such as overtime, which are anticipated to have a positive impact on the current forecast, negating the need for a transfer from reserve.

- What action is the OPCC taking to ensure that changes to the overtime budget will be effective?

The Force has been subject to a PCC Challenge on the subject of overtime, leading to increased scrutiny and a greater level of reporting. As a direct result of this challenge, overtime is reported monthly to the Resource Control Board, co-chaired by the PCC, and attended by both the

Chief Executive and the Treasurer. This ongoing scrutiny and challenge has led to significant work taking place in this area. It is also fair to say that the Police and Crime Panel is more aware of this challenge than previously, which brings its own level of external scrutiny, and is welcomed by the PCC.

That being said, the use of overtime as a vital and flexible tool in ensuring that officers are available as necessary to deal with demand cannot be overlooked. It is used to resource major operations, and other exceptional requirements, as well as covering day to day abstractions and unexpected demands. The Force is introducing a change to shift patterns this month that is expected to reduce the need for overtime, better matching plain time officer hours to anticipated demand.

Continued reporting to the Resource Control Board ensures oversight by the PCC of the impact of these changes.

- Why have the capital receipts not been achieved in year?

The two significant receipts anticipated in 2019/20 related to Christchurch and Wimborne. The sale of Wimborne is on hold pending further work to ensure alignment with the developing estates strategy, and recognising the impact of future uplift in police officer establishment.

The land and buildings at Christchurch are sold subject to planning, with the application due be considered on 21st November. The sale and subsequent receipt depend on the granting of planning permission, and the potential for further complications if it is granted, and clearly implications if it is not. As such, the receipt is not currently being forecast in the current financial year, although there should be further clarity in the next few weeks.

Taking learning from the Christchurch example, the force and OPCC will now be considering whether predicted capital receipts should be included in the capital budget, or whether those receipts should be reserved from being visible in the budget until funds are received.

- There appears to be a lot of turbulence over the capital budget in the last quarter. Can the OPCC explain and clarify what is not being undertaken that was planned for six months ago and the associated impact?

There has been a deliberate pause in some building works as the new Head of Estates takes stock of requirements and develops an updated estates strategy. This has resulted in a greater requirement for major works this year and less minor works. Again, much of this is in relation to national drivers such as the police officer uplift and the implementation of the police constable degree apprenticeship scheme. This is not expected to have an adverse operational impact.

Timing on the delivery of ICT work is such that delays are often experienced, and minor ICT schemes totalling £550,000 are expected to slip into 2020/21 as a result. Again, no adverse operational impact is anticipated.

- How is it intended to use the £757,000 that is being transferred from the PCP reserve?

£250,000 is the PCC contribution to the £1m Police Innovation Fund as agreed as part of the 2019/20 precept request. Also as previously reported to the Panel, the PCC has provided £250,000 to be spent on Force Wellbeing Initiatives.

The remaining £257,000 was added to the Commissioning budget, bringing it to a total of £1,261,000 for the year. Of this budget, £673,000 has been focussed on ongoing contracts such as the Victims Bureau, The Maple Project, Drug and Alcohol Intervention Programme and the Safer Schools and Communities Team.

This has left £588,000 to be spent on projects that have been developed throughout the life of the Police and Crime Plan, that were due to be commissioned during the year. Examples include, to Circles for support groups to reduce reoffending, to Weymouth and Poole for contributions to the CSAS scheme, for Pop-up Youth Centres, and for Mentoring schemes and support for veterans who find themselves homeless.

A full list of all projects commissioned in 2019/20, including projects funded from the Ministry of Justice Victims Fund grant as well as the above funding, is published on our website at <https://www.dorset.pcc.police.uk/working-in-partnership/commissioned-projects-2019-20/>

Noted

39. Vehicle Replacement Policy

Members considered a report by the Chief Finance Officer, OPCC which provided an updated on their work to review Dorset Police's vehicle fleet.

In response to a question from a member about whether the Force had enough vehicles to deal with the changing demands of policing, including the additional officers provided through the uplift, the Chief Financial Officer advised that there would be a requirement for additional vehicles and it was anticipated that central funding would be provided for this.

Noted

40. Youth Offending

Members considered a report by the Chief Executive, OPCC which updated members on the work to tackle youth offending and to reduce youth offending

locally, including the role of the Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service, Safe Schools and Communities Team and the PCC's role with these and other services.

Following a question about the figures at para 2.6 in the report and how they were calculated, the Chief Executive, OPCC advised that as part of the Government budget planning cycle all departments had been asked to model figures and this statement was reflective of where the different departments were in the budget cycle. This was an annual process.

One member commented that he understood the difficulty of balancing young people entering the Youth Justice system and made reference to his work with local youth clubs but questioned what could be done to increase engagement with young people. The Chief Executive, OPCC highlighted the importance of the Police working carefully with its partners and that whilst from a policing perspective he was happy that policing work in a prevention space, that the Police also had an important enforcement role.

Members expressed concerns about the number of young people entering the criminal justice system and the impact of the reduction in funding in relation to youth clubs and considered if there was an opportunity to canvass for more. The Chief Executive advised that the funding originally came from the Local Authority and it was difficult for the OPCC to step into that space.

The Vice-Chairman asked what the PCC could do locally and nationally to push the agenda forward to keep our young children who were struggling with speech or dyslexia out of the criminal justice system. The PCC advised that this was not his role to fund this, but accepted this group was vulnerable. He stressed that the 'getting children to school issue' was not one for the PCC but was a societal and government issue.

The PCC thanked members for their comments but felt it would be useful to summarise where the OPCC was in relation to youth crime. He reminded members that he was not a statutory partner and the Chief Executive's report had highlighted a huge loss in funding in this area from partner agencies. The Local Authorities had removed funding for youth services except for those that were statutory. He undertook to present a report to members about what his office had done to try to address and scrutinise the Police and partners at the next meeting.

The Chairman suggested that the PCC wrote to all the Partners in Dorset based on this issue and on the report that had been produced by his staff; the Panel could then support this in writing.

Resolved

That the PCC present a report on Youth Offending to members at their meeting on 4 February 2020.

41. Neighbourhood Engagement Contract

Members received a verbal update from the PCC on the progress with the Neighbourhood Engagement Contract.

The Director of Operations, OPCC reminded members that 18 months ago the PCC undertook to introduce a neighbourhood engagement contract, with a focus on strategic engagement. The contract clearly set out what the public could expect from the Police in their area. The OPCC had put the document together and this was now available online. The Director highlighted that there were 10 minimum standards listed on the contract, and noted the importance of face to face engagement as it brought out really great value. All 10 neighbourhood areas had now uploaded their plans to the Dorset Police website and Dorset Police had agreed that the OPCC could independently assess the plans and provide feedback. The OPCC had found that all the submitted plans were of a good standard.

One member made reference to a recent Safer Neighbourhood meeting and how he had been unable to find any advertising anywhere for it. The Director explained what happened in different areas as a result of good communication and was hopeful good practice could be replicated in other areas. He agreed that, in some areas, it may not be easy for members of the public to know about all the engagement opportunities available to them and that this had been fed back to the Force.

The Chairman was pleased to see this PCC led initiative had now come to fruition.

Noted

42. Complaints

Members received the minutes for the Complaints Sub-Committee meeting held on 24 September 2019.

The Chairman of the Complaints Sub-Committee advised members that no new complaints had been received and that there were no outstanding complaints.

Noted

43. Forward Plan

The Panel considered its Work Programmes and noted the inclusion of the following items:-

- Formal training for members would now take place on **Wednesday 8 January 2020** due to the timing of the General Election.
- As a result of the election it was anticipated that the budget settlement would be received later than usual, therefore it was agreed to move the budget briefing for members to later in January. The clerk would contact members regarding dates.

- **4 February 2020** – following the precept item in the morning session, there would be an item on elderly victims of crime in the afternoon.
- **25 June 2020** – Retail Crime – Concerns have been expressed both inside and outside of parliament that more needs to be done to tackle retail crime.
- **24 September 2020**, add the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and an item on future harm and protection (including Knife Crime and Serious Violence).

Resolved

That the Work Programme be updated accordingly.

44. Urgent items

There were no urgent items of business.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 am - 12.45 pm

Chairman

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Question from Cllr Les Fry to the Police and Crime Commissioner

Dorset currently has pan Dorset Strategies for CSE, Slavery and Vulnerability issues, as well as a pan Dorset MASH.

Is there any truth in what I have been told that the two Unitaries are actively looking to create Unitary solutions, indeed, I am told that Dorset Council has already withdrawn its staff from the MASH?

Surely 2 solutions are less effective and more expensive than one?

Answer from Martyn Underhill, Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner

Thank you for that interesting question.

To be honest, I am a little on the back foot here, as whilst I have heard the same information as you, that four staff have been recalled, I am not able to confirm this – as neither I, nor the Chief Constable, have received any further information through our various governance channels.

It would be quite disheartening if the rumours of the recent removal of Dorset Council staff from the MASH were true, especially if that had happened without consultation with policing and wider partners.

So, whilst I am afraid that I cannot confirm the information that you have heard, what I can say is that one of the areas of strength in our work in Dorset has been the ability to work together and evolve our public services to protect and safeguard children and young people.

The MASH has been central to this success, providing an opportunity for staff from different agencies to co-locate and share both information and operational delivery in a structured way. The MASH, currently based at Poole, is the product of a detailed piece of work, agreed by all partners, and involving a number of dedicated local practitioners whom drew upon national good practice. Crucially it ensures that police, health and social care safeguarding practitioners operate effectively and efficiently across unitary boundaries.

Despite this very strong history of successful partnership working, I have a growing sense that we are potentially rowing away from the joint working that we have worked hard to develop over recent years. Worryingly, I sense this is officer led rather than politician led.

I should say that despite my pan-Dorset role, I am not wedded to pan-Dorset structures.

However, both the Chief Constable and I would expect to see clear proposals and a business case for any suggested changes away from the current operating models beforehand.

Therefore, Cllr Fry's question raises a concerning point, and the Chief Constable and I are in the process of seeking further information. At the same time, across both Unitaries, thinking of your roles as elected members, I would very much welcome your support in attempting to understand the drivers behind this apparent retreat from successful partnership working.

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Notes on meeting held in October 2019 on proposed and ongoing improvements in Customer Service by the Dorset Police Force Command Centre.

Adam Harold took the chair in the absence of the PCC.

Superintendent Parkin confirmed that he had taken up a senior role in the FCC in August. His aim is move the provision of customer service from a stable to improving position and for this Jane Jennings is preparing a 3 to 5 year business case.

The Superintendent explained that his team is accountable to a monthly Gold Group chaired by Assistant Chief Constable Julie Fielding which sets the strategic aims and future direction for the department. Reporting to the Gold Group is a Silver Tactical Group chaired by Superintendent Parkin which supports and drives forward issues from the Gold Group.

As agreed with the ACC, a 100 days plan had been prepared focused around the three main priorities for the FCC of people, performance and process. As a consequence of this a Silver Tactical Actions Matrix (STAM) had been developed broken down into different thematics in order to ensure appropriate improvement in business and service.

It was confirmed that the ACC is keen to see improvements in service delivery and efficiency, in order to do so it was crucial to gain a better understanding of the performance data.

The Chief Constable is showing a personal interest in the performance of the department and to that end the Superintendent is ensuring that performance is closely monitored through daily, weekly and monthly statistics to ensure resource meets demand. Consideration was being given to investing in a resource management software tool, which automatically calculates the resource needed to meet demand at any particular time.

It was pointed out that 101 call answer times have significantly improved since the last Panel meeting from an average of 20 minutes to an answer time of 9.4 minutes. It was acknowledged that the PCC had expressed a desire to reduce answer times to an average of 5 minutes with an aim to reduce it to 3 minutes.

At the same time as reducing call answer times, call handling times have increased. There has therefore been a reinvestment in Quality and Standards Processes to review and provide support with the telephony skills of call handlers as to how they manage calls.

A new integrated Command and Control system was installed circa April 2019. It explained that there had been some technical issues with this and every effort would be made to avoid an impact on service delivery. However as mid October the team had met the best 999 call response times with 86% of 999 calls answered in 10 seconds and an average answer time of 12.2 seconds.

It had been discussed with the OPCC Senior Management Team including Simon Bullock and Adam Harold the quality of call handling. It was confirmed that the statistics indicate that Dorset Police call handlers achieve 90% in satisfaction surveys in terms of respect and fairness in how calls are handled.

A business case had been produced for new VAS software which would meet the appropriate standards for call centres in the public and private sector and which would bring with it the possibility of improved efficiencies. The aim would be for this to be in place by June 2020 as part of the upgrade to Storm.

A comment was made on the Policy and Process thematic and reminded the panel that as a force, Dorset Police are bound by the Home Office National Standards of Incident Recording, National Criminal Records Standards and Crime Data Integrity standards. The Superintendent added that out of the thousands of calls taken last year an opportunity in terms of crime recording process had been missed on just 7 occasions, putting Dorset Police at the top of 43 forces in terms of crime recording compliance.

It commented on that the 100 day plan includes provision for recruitment of more than 25 new members of staff by April 2020. Evening sessions have been set aside to encourage prospective applicants; there has also been a series of workshops and job fairs focused on the west side of the county including a stall at the recent Force Open Day. Awareness sessions were being arranged prior to the closing date so interested parties can understand the application process and the evidence they need to provide to meet the criteria. Post the application closing date an assessment would be arranged to put applicants through a series of tests and choose the top candidates and the first assessment centre was planned for this weekend.

Work was continuing to attract candidates to Winfrith via targeted social media but the recent campaign had resulted in only 8 applicants. It highlighted that Bournemouth was proving more successful in terms of attracting new staff. The 3 to 5 year business case includes the opportunity to embrace Bournemouth more and the proposed upgrades to non-emergency radio and telephony enable the department to operate virtually across the two sites.

In terms of the Quality and Standards (Q&S) thematic, as mentioned above, action was being taken to reinvest in a Q&S assessment of all call handlers, together with managers and supervisors who are held to account for their teams.

A revised training package was being introduced for existing staff and new recruits with the addition of staff training resource. The training package would match the relevant standards for public and private sector. Management and leadership training was also being arranged for current supervisors.

The panel then went on to consider a selection of ten cases of public contact examples which were circulated to the panel for their review.

Finally, the panel note noted the terms of reference which now provides for the appointment of a deputy chairman of the panel should the PCC be unavailable for future meetings

Cllr Barry Goringe Dorset Council