

NORTHUMBRIA PCC MINUTES

Title

Business Meeting

Date

27 August 2020

Location

Middle Engine Lane

Duration

1pm -3.20pm

Present:

Kim McGuinness – Police and Crime Commissioner

Winton Keenen – Chief Constable

Ruth Durham – Chief of Staff of the OPCC

Debbie Ford – Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)

Adrian Pearson – Director of Planning and Delivery

Tanya Reade – Corporate Governance Manager, NP

Mike Tait - Joint Chief Finance Officer (Joint CFO)

Vicki Wilson – Minute Taker

OPEN SESSION

1. Minutes of the Open Session of the Business Meeting held on 28 July 2020

The minutes were agreed as a true record.

2. Matters Arising

It was agreed that Mike Tait would approach the Chair of JIAC to seek his endorsement of the update reports to the Commissioner and Chief following JIAC meetings.

3. Violence Reduction Unit

The Commissioner felt the joint liaison between the OPCC and the Force had been strengthened, and special thanks were given to Chief Inspector Karen Murray, VRU and Neil Wardingham, Business Analyst for their work with this.

The plan for Year 3 would commence in the following week. Two plans would effectively be created; one in the event funding was received, and one in the event no funding was received.



The PCC outlined the recruitment within the VRU Team and noted the most recent addition of a Domestic Abuse Specialist which allowed the skills and knowledge within the team to broaden.

The PCC outlined the various work taking place by the VRU Team with regards to visits and online meetings with external partners.

A discussion took place regarding the high possibility that future evaluations from the Government may be more rigorous, and would impact their funding decisions. The CC suggested liaising with the Force's Funding and Innovation Manager, Beth Chew who could assist with broadening funding applications.

4. Op Talla (COVID-19) Recovery Planning

The Chief of Staff highlighted the discussions taking place within the LCJB Recovery Group and drew particular attention to the fact a Jury Trial would commence within the following week. The logistics of this were explained along with the idea of creating ad hoc space outside to use for deliberation rooms.

Data received from two sources were conflicting in the amount of live cases within the system. The courts were investigating this discrepancy.

If the Jury Trial next week was a success, a decision would be made on ensuring other Courts had the necessary resources to also undertake further jury trials.

In terms of processing receipts and proposals through the Magistrates Court, Northumbria was exceeding national figures which was positive. It was noted that Berwick Magistrates would not be opened as of yet; however, it was unsure whether this was due to capacity issues or funding issues.

Concern regarding bail times had been raised at the Recovery Group. The DCC advised that the Force were carrying out a lot of work around this within their limits and they were aware of the risks involved of those out on bail potentially re-offending during this period.

The DCC advised that weekly meetings were taking place although these had been absorbed into the Executive Team meetings. The recovery planning was extremely thorough and all of the buildings were being risk assessed to ensure COVID-19 secure environments. Work around the use of PPE was being carried out to ensure the stock was in place and all staff were adhering to the rules.

There was an uplift in the amount of prisoners which was positive, with a figure of 1416. Approximately 40 per week of virtual remand cases were being carried out



which added pressure to the Custody Team. The DCC outlined the transport logistics involved with this. The costs of all work involved were constantly monitored.

The CC outlined work with other partners and how this was being improved. It was hoped the Force could be more directly involved with other Recovery Groups across the region to ensure a collaborative consistent goal. The DCC felt that the membership of groups should be assessed based on the recovery goal to ensure the correct expertise when dealing with specific matters.

The CC highlighted the potential of more demonstrations in the region, particularly regarding BLM, and noted a national issue with Unlicensed Music Events; however, advised this was not a specific issue for this region. The DCC outlined work in place to protect specific monuments which may be targeted. The CC outlined the Force powers with regards to gatherings.

Following a query, the DCC advised that staff were still working from home where they could, which had resource and financial implications regarding the use of buildings. This would be revisited and monitored following the winter period.

The location of Neighbourhood Policing Teams is being considered to ensure they are appropriately located and costs are consistent with the benefits achieved. This was to be discussed in further detail; the PCC would be kept informed of any developments.

5. National Issues Impacting Policing

The likelihood of a no deal EU Exit was increasing. The Force had been preparing for such an eventuality but it was noted that Local Authorities would be impacted with regards to their planning and preparation.

The CC advised of other forthcoming issues including the end of the furlough scheme and changes to the eviction laws which may have serious impacts on people. These would continue to be monitored as they came into effect.

There was also the high potential of an increase of refugees once the EU Exit date approached which could lead to more Hate Crime across various groups. The Force were working on the various ways in which these would be dealt with and the compassion needed when dealing with people in need of assistance.

6. This item was moved to the closed session.



7. Forensic Collision Investigation Network S22a Legal Agreement

The DCC outlined the details involved with the FCIN. The PCC **agreed** to sign the legal agreement immediately following this meeting.

8. Statement of Accounts 2019/20

The timeline was on track for the completion of the Statement of Accounts. It was likely that the Audit Completion Statement issued by Mazaars would be completed earlier than 26 November.

Attention was drawn to the General Reserve which stood at £12,126m as at 31 March 2020. However the plan was that this would reduce to £9.2m by the end of 2020 to allow for movement of funds to assist with COVID-19 costs.

The finances would be discussed in further detail at a specific Finance Meeting on 28 August.

9. HMICFRS – Roads Policing: Not optional An inspection of roads policing in England and Wales

The DCC highlighted the report from HMICFRS, which outlined 13 recommendations, five of which had been addressed to CCs. The Force position had been outlined against each of the points.

The CC highlighted the various work in place regarding Road Safety along with external partners, and explained the way some of this work had been adjusted due to a change in resources.

The Force constantly monitored their work with Road Safety and accident statistics alongside public sentiment to determine the priority level.

Following a discussion, it was felt that Road Policing would not need to be added to the Police and Crime Plan as a stand-alone issue.

The PCC confirmed that HMICFRS updates against recommendations and areas for improvement could continue to be presented at the Scrutiny meetings in line with current reporting arrangements.



10. HMICFRS – PEEL Spotlight Report – A Call For Help

The DCC advised that this inspection had been carried out in 2018/19 and should have been published in the Autumn of 2019. Due to the delay with this, the recommendations outlined within the report were already being addressed or had been completed. The current Force position against each recommendation was provided.

However, due to the report being from 2018/19, the Force had been named as a cause for concern with regards to call handling which was no longer accurate. Despite several attempts, the Force was unable to be removed from the inspection report. This had caused unnecessary concern with partner groups and public confidence.

The DCC had since presented a report to JIAC, and outlined the current work in place which gave a clear indication of the progress being made against each of the recommendations.

The PCC highlighted a trend from various complaints which had stated the large amount of time it had taken to be connected to a 101 Operator to then be told to report their concern online instead. The DCC requested the complaints data regarding this in order to investigate this matter. OPCC Director of Governance and Communications to provide.

11. HMICFRS – PEEL Spotlight Report – The Hard Yards

The DCC outlined the main highlights of the report. The Force were aware of the benefits of collaboration; however, there would need to be careful consideration to ensure there were operational and financial benefits for both parties.

Discussions regarding this issue were currently ongoing as part of Business Planning and the PCC would be kept informed of any future developments.

12. Forward Plan

It was agreed that the Late Night Levy would be discussed at the September meeting, but also kept on the agenda for the November meeting when further information would be available. The JIAC update would be moved from October to the September meeting as the meeting took place in August.

13. Any Other Business

There was no other business to discuss.

14. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday 15 September – 2pm – Victory House