

SOUTH YORKSHIRE'S POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD

12 MAY 2020

PRESENT: Dr Alan Billings (Police and Crime Commissioner)
Michelle Buttery (Chief Executive and Solicitor, OPCC)
Erika Redfearn (Head of Governance, OPCC)
Kevin Wright (Evaluation & Scrutiny Officer, OPCC)
Sally Parkin (Governance and Compliance Manager)
Fiona Topliss (Community Engagement & Communications Manager, OPCC)
Sophie Abbott (Deputy Chief Finance Officer, OPCC)
Stephen Watson (Chief Constable, SYP)
Mark Roberts (Deputy Chief Constable, SYP)
David Hartley (Assistant Chief Constable, SYP)
Tim Forber (Assistant Chief Constable, OPCC)
Lauren Poultney (Assistant Chief Constable, OPCC)
Carrie Goodwin (Head of Corporate Communications, SYP)
Debbie Carrington (Interim Chief Finance Officer, SYP)
Stuart Barton (Chief Superintendent, Sheffield)
Andrew Lockley (Chair of the Ethics Panel)
Steve Wragg (Chair of the Joint Independent Audit Committee)

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillor Paul Wood and Jackie Bland.

1 **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The Commissioner welcomed those who had dialled into meeting, including Councillors Nevett and Short, members of the Police and Crime Panel, and three members of the press (P Whitehouse, G Dennison and G Torr).

2 **FILMING NOTIFICATION**

The Commissioner confirmed that the meeting was being sounded recorded and, subject to the sound quality, would be published on the website.

3 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Commissioner made reference to the Covid-19 announcements made by the Prime Minister on Sunday 11 May 2020.

The Commissioner commented that generally, public opinion is that the Force is getting the policing approach about right, though some wanted more enforcement.

The Commissioner invited the Chief Constable to provide an update on the Covid-19 announcement.

The Chief Constable confirmed that the new dispensation comes into effect tomorrow (13 May 2020). The changes are notable in relation to permitted reasons to leave the house but little will change in terms of the policing style. The Force will continue to take the approach of engaging, explaining and encouraging the public and reserve enforcement for the times when it is absolutely necessary and proportionate.

390 fixed penalty notices have been issued since the beginning of the lockdown. This is a relatively small number and the Force is grateful to the public for their understanding and sensible choices.

The Force is very clear that the public are still advised to socially distance from anyone who is not a member of their household. If officers encounter large groups they will enquire who people are with rather than where they are going.

The Chief Constable agreed with the Commissioner in relation to the public's reaction to the Force's policing style. Complaints received have been around the Force doing more. There has been no complaints received where enforcement action had been taken. This points to the Force getting it right.

The Commissioner reiterated that the message was about who you are with rather than where you are going.

4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

5 URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

6 ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

There were no items to be considered in the absence of the public and press.

7 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

8 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD HELD ON 7 APRIL 2020

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

9 MATTERS ARISING/ACTIONS

389	In future, paragraphs in reports should be numbered. 12/05/2020 – complete. DISCHARGED
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10 FORCE PERFORMANCE - SHEFFIELD DISTRICT SUMMARY UPDATE

A verbal update was provided in relation to local operationally based delivery of the Police and Crime Plan in Sheffield, in line with the reporting requirements.

The Commissioner requested that the update include street begging and the shootings which had taken place over the weekend.

S Barton highlighted that overall performance in Sheffield was good. This included an increase in arrests, reductions in burglaries and good response times. This was partly as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic but also as a result of some good work done by the district.

The Commissioner highlighted the reduction in burglary and robbery and enquired if this was the same for commercial burglary. S Barton confirmed that Sheffield district had been concerned about commercial burglary but this had also dropped. This was as a result of officers focusing on a few key individuals some of whom have received custodial sentences.

Neighbourhood policing has grown over the last 12 months and Sheffield will be having an additional 21 officers in the autumn as a result of the Police Now scheme.

The Commissioner highlighted that these are young people who have done well at university and will be coming in to neighbourhood policing teams to problem solve.

Sheffield now has a fifth neighbourhood policing team in the North West of the district. This originally came under the city centre.

S Barton provided a brief update for each of the Sheffield policing areas.

North East

There had been issues with Covid-19 compliance in the Page Hall area by a small number of individuals. Officers and staff have done a good job in engaging with the local community including using interpreters.

Violent crime is a concern in the Burngreave area. Sheffield district is working with the Violence Reduction Unit to establish what can be done over the next few months.

The district is working with the local authority around fly tipping.

South East

The neighbourhood policing team has increased in size and links with the local community have grown following the shooting earlier in the year.

City Centre

A lot of work has taken place with the rough sleepers in Sheffield. S Barton confirmed that he was disappointed with some of the correspondence received around begging. A weekly meeting takes place to discuss people with complex needs. Officers know who the individuals are and plans are in place to help them including trying to find accommodation. This is one of the districts priorities.

The Commissioner said that while some people wanted greater police action against rough sleepers, others were also concerned about the rough sleepers welfare and confirmed it was good to have reassurance around this.

Sheffield district have won a purple flag award for its work to address the night time economy. S Barton acknowledged that the issues around the night time economy would return and confirmed that the district is planning for this.

South West

S Barton referred to the shootings which had taken place over the weekend. This was between two feuding gangs. He confirmed that the approach being taken is the same as that used following the shooting in the Manor and Arbourthorne area. A number of arrests have been made and a firearm has been seized. High visible patrols are taking place in the affected areas to provide reassurance to local residents.

The Commissioner was pleased to hear that the same approach is being taken as was used in the Manor and Arbourthorne area. This had worked well.

S Barton confirmed he had received a pledge from Force Command that he will get the resources required to deal with this.

The repeat callers unit is very productive and has issued 25 behaviour orders and seven closure orders.

The Commissioner highlighted that he had visited the repeat callers unit and had been impressed with the work undertaken.

S Barton commended the bravery and commitment of staff and thanked his command team for all their hard work over the last few weeks and months.

The Chief Constable confirmed that Sheffield is a solidly performing district.

He acknowledged that the shootings are very concerning for members of the public and confirmed that these are being taken seriously. A proactive plan is in place for both overt and covert policing in the area and the general public should be reassured.

Neighbourhood policing continues to grow in Sheffield and this is replicated across the county. This continued growth along with the quality of the work taking place is underpinning an increase in confidence in the police. This has been confirmed by the national neighbourhood alerts survey. The survey went to over 25,000 people. The responses received showed that 67.5% of residents who receive SYP Alerts have more confidence in their police than they did 12 months ago. More

information can be found at:

<https://www.neighbourhoodalert.co.uk/2020NationalSurvey>

11 FORCE PERFORMANCE REPORT AGAINST POLICE AND CRIME PLAN 2017 - 2021 (RENEWED 2019) - PROTECTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE

A report of the Chief Constable was presented to the Board. The purpose of the report was to provide an update on the progress against the protecting vulnerable people priority of the Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021 in support of the Commissioner's overarching aim of South Yorkshire being a safe place in which to live, learn and work.

The Commissioner highlighted the concern around the impact on victims during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown.

T Forber confirmed that domestic abuse and child abuse had been a concern for the Force since the lockdown began.

In the first few weeks of the lockdown, forces nationally had not seen an increase in domestic abuse reporting. However, during weeks 4, 5 and 6 the Force has now seen increased reporting of around 14% per week.

There has been one domestic homicide in South Yorkshire since the lockdown began.

T Forber highlighted that victims may not be in a position to report domestic abuse to the police during the lockdown because of the continuous close proximity of the offender and victim. In response to this concern, an online reporting platform aimed at increasing the accessibility for reporting domestic abuse has been developed. This online platform receives exactly the same response as if the victim had contacted SYP by phone. This came on stream during week 5 of the lockdown and the Force has received 36 reports through this medium.

Where online reporting is not an option, another more immediate support has been introduced. The 'silent solution' enables victims to press 55 whilst on a 999 call to allow the police to listen to a call without the need to speak. A radio advert has been used to promote this.

A short leaflet has also been produced, aligned with the SYP 'Who's pulling your strings' campaign to outline where people can get help during Covid-19. This leaflet is designed to ensure officers and staff have the latest contact information to provide members of the public who are suffering domestic abuse.

T Forber highlighted that if domestic violence is not reported the Force is not able to deal with it.

The Commissioner made reference to the 'Inspire to Change' programme and enquired if this was still continuing. T Forber confirmed that it was.

The new Domestic Violence Protection Notice (DVPN) Team was highlighted. T Forber confirmed that DVPN notices enables space to be put between the victim and the perpetrator. SYP is a leading force in the use of DVPN. The Force has

invested in a specific team who obtain the notices and deal with any breaches. In the first month 69 notices had been obtained resulting in 53 orders being issued.

The Commissioner raised concerns about child abuse and enquired what is happening now that children are not in school. T Forber confirmed this is another cause of concern. A large number of the signs of child abuse are picked up by schools but this no longer taking place. Training for officers and staff has been re-enforced and all employees have been asked to show an increased degree of professional curiosity.

The Commissioner enquired about suicides. T Forber confirmed that the Force has not seen an increase in the rate of suicides compared with figures from last year. The Force has seen an increase in the volume of mental health 'tagged' calls over the last few weeks.

The Commissioner asked if the type of criminality was changing. T Forber confirmed that crime was down significantly, a 19% reduction in the last 12 week period. The Force has seen a shift in crime types in particular an increase in fraud. The Force is being proactive in giving crime prevention advice. T Forber commented that some of the financial institutions are also giving crime prevention advice which is pleasing to see.

T Forber highlighted the resilience of the workforce and confirmed that the Force continues to provide a full policing service in difficult and challenging times.

The Commissioner thanked the workforce for all their hard work and dedication.

12 SYP'S OUTTURN REPORT 2019/20

A report of the Chief Constable was presented to the Board. The purpose of the report was to inform the Board of the Force's draft outturn on its revenue and capital budgets as at 31 March 2020. It is based on an analysis of income and expenditure for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 before accounting adjustments.

D Carrington provided the following high level figures.

The Force outturn is a £1.2m underspend, which is 0.49% of the total budget.

Legacy costs have underspent by £4.9m. This reflects the Home Office funding 85% of each legacy claim with the remaining 15% being funded by SYP. These underspends will be transferred back into reserves to help meet the future legacy costs.

The Force over achieved its saving target, £4.6m against a savings target of £3.9m.

Districts and departments have delivered on the revenue bids supported by the Senior Command Team.

The cost of the floods was £0.2m. The Force has not received any notification of funding from the Bellwin scheme.

The Commissioner enquired how the Bellwin scheme worked. This is applied for and paid to local authorities.

The financial impact of delays and closures relating to Covid-19 has been assessed and this equates to £0.4m of revenue costs and £2m of capital spend planned. This will not be incurred during 2019/20. This has increased the capital slippage and will add additional pressure to the 2020/21 revenue budget.

The uplift funding has been repurposed to cover Covid-19 costs.

The Commissioner confirmed that he expected some funding for the Covid-19 expenditure. The repurposing of the uplift funding has caused concern for some Forces. SYP is not reliant on this during 2020/21. It was agreed that the uplift position should be monitored and a full position try to be established.

The capital programme has brought some challenges and work is ongoing with the Commissioner's interim Chief Finance Officer to look at this.

The Commissioner enquired about the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the council tax fund. S Abbott confirmed that this may be around £1m and impact on the 2021/22 budget.

The Commissioner enquired about the Crime Review. T Forber confirmed that phase 1 of the review was now complete and the Force is up to strength. There are a further two phases to be completed.

IT WAS AGREED THAT:

- **The uplift position would be monitored and a full picture established and presented at a future PAB**

13 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT UPDATE REPORT

A report of the Chief Executive and Solicitor was presented to the Board. The purpose was:

- to explain the work that is being undertaken to continue with the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) statutory obligation to engage with the public and hold the Chief Constable to account for his engagement, and
- to outline how the Office is understanding how the public is feeling in relation to the police's application of emergency legislation in relation to the coronavirus outbreak and how local community organisations and commissioned services are faring.

F Topliss commented that during the course of the year much of the engagement work (although not all) is carried out within communities through face-to-face engagement at community meetings and events.

The Office now has mechanisms in place to make virtual contact with groups and individuals to gather their concerns and feedback on issues that are affecting their and their communities relating to policing services, during this current pandemic.

F Topliss highlighted Page Hall and Hexthorpe continues to cause concerns. The public feel more should be done by the police to use the new powers to issue fines.

A number of non-policing concerns are being raised including an increase in fly tipping and garden fires.

The Commissioner confirmed he had received correspondence in relation to fly tipping but this is a local authority issue. He highlighted that recycling centres have re-opened this week.

The majority of the public is adhering to the Government guidelines and the Force is policing proportionately and the public are mostly appreciative of how they are responding to reports and tackling issues.

Correspondence continues to be received and again is generally positive.

14 PCC DECISIONS

The report was noted.

15 PAB WORK PROGRAMME

M Buttery highlighted the neighbourhood policing work being undertaken by the Office. This work is evolving and following discussion with the Force will be brought to a future meeting of the Board.

16 IEP EXCEPTION REPORTING

A Lockley presented the Independent Ethics Panel's (IEP) exception report.

The Panel receive statistics in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion which assists the Commissioner in fulfilling his statutory responsibility in this area. There were some good numbers in relation to the proportion of females police officers reaching a new high. However, there was two areas of concern in relation to BME and VME.

The Panel was concerned that quarter 4 had seen just one BME and 0 VME officers recruited, where previous quarters have seen an average of 4 and 3. One possible reason for this was the departure of the positive outreach lead in December 2019.

The Chief Constable acknowledged the point and confirmed a new outreach officer had now been recruited. He highlighted that not all outreach work had stopped following the departure of the outreach worker. This is embedded in recruitment processes and is not just down to one individual. The Chief Constable also suggested it may be a little bit early to draw any firm conclusions from the information provided and that this needed to be looked at in the round. A Lockley confirmed that he was reassured by what the Chief Constable had said.

The other area of concern was in relation to the under-representation at the sergeant rank. The Panel will be working with the Force to establish if this is unique to SYP and whether any good practice could be identified from elsewhere.

Statistical information on stop and search had been received from the Force, which showed that despite a huge increase in stops and searches in the two years to March 2020, positive outcomes have remained steady at between 20% and 25% throughout that period.

The Panel is undertaking some work on ethnic disproportionality in stop and searches. Current data about school students in Sheffield shows a higher number of BME students than in the census data. The Panel is hoping to obtain figures for Doncaster, Barnsley and Rotherham schools.

The Commissioner commented that this could have national significance. The census data is ten years out of date and more accurate data is required.

A Lockley confirmed that the Panel is progressing the work the Commissioner had asked them to do in relation to the police's ethical use of the emergency provisions which have been enacted to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic.

A Lockley commented on the useful factsheet produced by Legal Services in relation to what is legislation and what is guidance. He enquired if something like this would be produced for the new guidance and legislation due the following day. The Chief Constable acknowledged the first class information being provided by Legal Services which is being used nationally and confirmed that further information would be produced.

17 JAC EXCEPTION REPORTING

S Wragg presented the Joint Independent Audit Committee's (JIAC) exception report.

S Wragg highlighted the following points.

Member's terms of office have been finalised. One member's term of office has been extended for the next 12 months and two members have been re-appointed and commence their second term of office for three years.

There are some outstanding issues in relation to Atlas Court and these continue to be discussed.

Work is ongoing in relation to the PCC's Assurance Framework but this has slowed as a result of Covid-19.

The Internal Audit plan is on track.

There are some concerns around the timetable for the final accounts, which has been relaxed to 30 November, due to the current situation. The Force and PCC are aiming to meet the previously published deadlines but it is unclear whether the External Auditors will have the resources available to complete their work.

The Commissioner confirmed he had met with the External Auditors and everything appeared to be on track.

18 ANY OTHER BUSINESS - TO BE NOTIFIED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING

There was no any other business.

19 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

11 June 2020 at 10am, Doncaster Council Chamber, Civic Office, Waterdale, Doncaster, DN1 3BU.

CHAIR

