

SOUTH YORKSHIRE'S POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD

10 NOVEMBER 2020

PRESENT: Dr Alan Billings (Police and Crime Commissioner)
Michelle Buttery (Chief Executive and Solicitor)
Sophie Abbott (Interim Chief Finance Officer)
Erika Redfearn (Head of Governance)
Fiona Topliss (Community Engagement & Communications Manager)
Sally Parkin (Governance and Compliance Manager)
Kevin Wright (Evaluation and Scrutiny Officer)
Ellie Parkinson (Performance and Assurance Officer)
Stephen Watson (Chief Constable)
Mark Roberts (Deputy Chief Constable)
Tim Forber (Assistant Chief Constable)
Lauren Poultney (Assistant Chief Constable)
Debbie Carrington (Interim Director of Finance)
Alison Fletcher (Office Manager)
Steve Chapman (Temporary Chief Superintendent, Rotherham)
Lynne Knox (Superintendent, Rotherham)
A Macaskill (Chair of the Independent Ethics Panel)
Steve Wragg (Chair of the Joint Independent Audit Committee)

APOLOGIES: Jackie Bland, David Hartley, Carrie Goodwin and Erika Redfearn

1 **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The Commissioner welcomed those who had joined the meeting, including Councillors Short, Steinke, Sansome, Grocutt and Nevett (members of the Police and Crime Panel), and two members of the press (P Whitehouse and D Andrews).

2 **VIDEO CONFERENCING AND RECORDING**

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

3 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

4 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no public questions.

5 URGENT ITEMS

The Commissioner invited the Chief Constable to provide an update on policing issues associated with the Covid-19 pandemic and the fireworks following Bonfire night.

The Chief Constable acknowledged the second national lockdown and the unique challenges this brings. The Force continues to come together with partner agencies through the Local Resilience Forum.

As with the first lockdown, the Force is starting to see a reduction in general demand following the closure of pubs and the night time economy. Some members of staff have been affected by Covid-19 but the Force still has the capacity to deal with the additional demand.

The Chief Constable highlighted the change in public mood which is used as a benchmark to calibrate the Force's response to Covid-19 regulations. The majority of the public are resigned to the lockdown, but are intolerant of the small minority who are breaching the regulations. There is an increase in enforcement. In some cases, people are being irresponsible by holding parties and people have been fined thousands of pounds.

In relation to fireworks this is usually a very busy time for the Force, the Force has not seen the same level of demand. There has been pockets of people engaging in foolish behaviour including fireworks being fired at people. Steps have been taken to increase the police presence and where necessary, people have been brought into custody. Work has also taken place with the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

The Chief Constable urged parents to make sure they know where their children are and, if they have access to fireworks, they should be under their direct supervision.

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 13 OCTOBER 2020

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

9 MATTERS ARISING / ACTIONS

392	Headings be included for all future reports on the Police and Crime Plan priorities 10/09/20 – Ongoing 13/10/20 – New templates are being developed
393	The content of future Protecting Vulnerable People

	reports be discussed with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) 10/09/20 – Ongoing 13/10/20 – See action 392
396	The Commissioner’s Office would establish if Sheffield City Council are considering a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) in the Page Hall area. 13/10/20 – Ongoing
397	A report on the benefits of the uplift in Switchboard staff and the Digital Desk at Atlas Court be brought back to the Public Accountability Board in June 2021. 30/10/20 – Added to the work programme for June 2021 meeting. DISCHARGED

10 FORCE PERFORMANCE - ROTHERHAM DISTRICT SUMMARY UPDATE

A report of the Chief Constable was presented to the Board. The purpose of the report was to provide a brief update on local operationally based delivery of the Police and Crime Plan in Rotherham, in line with the reporting requirements.

The Commissioner welcomed to the meeting Superintendent L Knox, the new Superintendent at Rotherham.

The Commissioner highlighted the dedicated team for domestic abuse investigations and enquired about the specialist domestic abuse scene attender. S Chapman confirmed that the scene attender had been introduced at the beginning of the first lockdown. They provide a rapid victim-focused response to reports of domestic abuse, often after an arrest has occurred, or when one is imminent. The role focuses on building additional support, with the ultimate aim of empowering victims to support the police investigation. The Commissioner enquired if one scene attender was sufficient. S Chapman acknowledged that in an ideal world he would like additional resources, but he understood wider resourcing constraints. Help and support for survivors of domestic abuse and sexual exploitation in Rotherham is also provided by Rotherham Rise.

The Commissioner enquired about the Evolve Team. The Evolve Team was established in 2016, and is a multi-agency team consisting of police officers working alongside social workers, youth offending workers and Barnardo’s staff. They aim to minimise trauma - from initial contact to court appearance - for those affected by child exploitation. The Evolve Team links into the weekly intelligence meeting where the police and partners come together to discuss young people, premises or other situations where it is believed that there is a risk of exploitation.

S Chapman highlighted that police and partners in Rotherham remain committed to tackling both Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE). He informed the Board that a joint video between the Force and the council had been developed for hotels to help them spot the signs of CSE and CCE. This is being launched during Safeguarding Adults Week (16- 22 November 2020).

The Commissioner enquired if the Covid-19 pandemic had impacted on CSE and CCE. S Chapman confirmed that Covid-19 had not had an impact; referral

numbers had remained consistent and people had still been able to come together via agile working to address any concerns.

The Commissioner highlighted crime and anti-social behaviour and commented that burglary was a concern, which members of the public in Rotherham contacted him about. S Chapman confirmed that, in the months June to September, Rotherham had seen a 19% reduction in residential burglary when compared to the preceding four months (or a 33% reduction when compared against the same period in 2019). In October 2020, there has been 77 reports of residential burglary (a 40% reduction on last year). This success was put down to quickly identifying areas of highest demand and matching this against known offenders.

The Commissioner enquired about the Organised Crime Group (OCG) coordinator. S Chapman confirmed this post had been funded by the Safer Rotherham Partnership. The post will be responsible for improving the information and intelligence between partner agencies to create more opportunities to disrupt OCG activity.

The Commissioner highlighted the use of Stop and Search, and enquired if Stop and Search scrutiny panels had continued during the Covid-19 pandemic. S Chapman confirmed that a scrutiny panel had taken place. Stop and Search had also been taken to the Force's internal Ethics Committee.

Community Action Partnerships (CAPS) were raised by the Commissioner. He enquired if these were the old Partners and Communities Together (PACT) meetings. S Chapman confirmed that they are. There are 21 monthly meetings across the district. These are attended by local councillors and a PSCO, PC or a sergeant, and are about gathering intelligence at a local level and reporting back on activity which has taken place. The Commissioner welcomed the emphasis on it being a partnership approach (and responsibility).

The Commissioner highlighted the success the district has had in reducing the use of off-road bikes at the Waterfront Gold Club, and the multi-agency approach to 'boy racers' at Cortonwood Retail Park. S Chapman confirmed that he had built on the work undertaken by the previous District Commander.

The Commissioner informed S Chapman that local community members had enquired about having their own community speed watch scheme. S Chapman confirmed that he would welcome this interaction. There would be some health and safety issues and training to overcome, but he would be happy to progress this further.

L Knox highlighted that Rotherham is linking in with the Police Service of Northern Ireland in relation to off-road bikes to identify best practice and share experiences.

The Commissioner enquired about the recruitment of additional officers in Rotherham. S Chapman confirmed that local communities had challenged the number of minority officers in key/senior positions in Rotherham. As a result, Inspector Abdul Aziz is leading Rotherham's local campaign to encourage applications to join the police. The district has held online forums to attract interest and applications from minority groups and, subject to Covid-19 restrictions, plans to engage with local schools and colleges.

The Chief Constable complimented Rotherham on the thorough report which highlighted a large amount of initiatives, and showed the effective management taking place. He also formally welcomed L Knox and confirmed the people of Rotherham would benefit from this addition.

S Chapman confirmed the district would be focusing on problem solving and investigations.

L Knox highlighted that the district would also be taking forward officers becoming more victim focused, and disrupting OCGs through partnership working with agencies such as HM Revenue and Customs.

The Commissioner thanked S Chapman for the report.

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 acknowledged the full and detailed report.

The Commissioner enquired about Operation Encompass and the relationship with schools in Barnsley. T Forber highlighted that domestic abuse is a hidden crime that can take place 20 to 30 times before this is reported. This is happening more in lockdown. Op Encompass is one outlet where schools can be alerted if a young person witnesses domestic abuse at home. The Force has good engagement across Sheffield, Doncaster and Rotherham, but not currently in Barnsley. This is due to resourcing issues in schools in Barnsley. T Forber confirmed that the Force's ambition is for every school to engage with Op Encompass.

The Commissioner raised the N8 Policing Research Partnership. T Forber confirmed this is a funded project which aims to explore policing domestic abuse within the context of the Covid-19 lockdown. He highlighted the importance of independent academic evaluation and the lessons to be learnt.

The Commissioner enquired about the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) Vulnerability Assessment Tool (VAT). T Forber highlighted the amount of learning all forces and agencies had undertaken around the exploitation of children over the last 10 years. The VAT will enable a standardised and consistent approach for any child with recognised indicators of CSE, CCE and County Lines. Weekly Multi Agency Child Exploitation meetings take place to understand the threat, risk and harm to children, and provide bespoke support for children and their broader families.

The Commissioner enquired about the issues around transportation of individuals detained under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act (taking persons to a place of safety). T Forber highlighted that, historically, police stations were used as a place of safety for people detained under Section 136 due to the lack of hospital provision. This no longer happens. If someone is detained under Section 136, an ambulance should be called to transport them to a place of safety. Due to the

increasing demand and pressure on the ambulance service as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, there is an increasing trend for a police vehicle to be used. The Force is working with its mental health partners to identify a different solution to address this.

The Commissioner enquired if there was any forum where this could be raised. M Roberts confirmed that there was no lack of will from the Ambulance Service; there is just a lack of capacity. He also highlighted that, sometimes, when someone is having a mental health episode, they can be a risk to themselves or other people and sometimes transportation in a police vehicle is the correct approach.

The Digital Desk at Atlas Court was raised by the Commissioner. T Forber confirmed that there would be 16 digital desk operators who would provide live chats and respond to online reports of crime, opening up new lines of communication.

The Commissioner enquired about SYP's Complete Victim Care approach. T Forber confirmed this was about placing the victim of crime at the heart of everything the Force does. To improve the service provided to victims, the Force has made significant improvements to response times and improved its investigative standards and technological capability. Emphasis is also on agreeing with the victim when and how they want to be contacted. Vulnerable victims' satisfaction with the whole experience has seen a gradual increase over the last 12 months.

S Chapman highlighted that not everyone wants to go down the criminal justice route. Towards the end of 2017, the Force focused heavily on 'out of court' disposals and restorative justice, and this has been accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Commissioner requested a report be brought to a future meeting on Restorative Justice.

The Commissioner highlighted the issue of trials being delayed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the impact on victims and witnesses. The Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) is looking at the court flow of work. Partners are working hard to get back to normal, but it is anticipated that it may be the middle of next year before this happens.

It was agreed that:

- **A report on Restorative Justice be brought to a future Public Accountability Board**

12 SYP'S QUARTERLY BUDGET MONITORING OVERVIEW

A report of the Chief Constable was presented to the Board. The purpose of the report was to inform the Public Accountability Board of the Force's projected outturn on its revenue and capital budgets as at 31 March 2021. It is based on an analysis of income and expenditure for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 before accounting adjustments. This report covers the Force financial position only, and should be read in conjunction with the report by the PCC's Chief Finance Officer.

D Carrington informed the Board that the Force outturn is a £1.75m overspend. This includes £2.67m of direct Covid-19 related expenditure, with future loss of income of £0.56m. If you remove the Covid-19 expenditure, the Force would be in an underspend position.

Approved growth bids have been affected by Covid-19, and the focus is now on Covid-19 related activity. This puts additional pressure on next year's budget.

There are underspends relating to police staff pay and overtime, premises and transport.

The Covid-19 overspend has reduced slightly, and the Force is in a stronger position to understand the Covid-19 spend, and reflect this.

The Home Office has agreed to reimburse the medical-grade PPE spend incurred, which equates to £0.47m. This is included in the income projection based on the claim the Force submitted. The Home Office has also agreed to reimburse the Force for loss of income. The scheme will involve a 5% deductible rate, and will compensate 75 pence in every pound of relevant loss thereafter. A claim has been submitted for £0.36m for loss of income for April to July.

The Commissioner enquired if there had been any issues in relation to the definitions around the loss of income. D Carrington confirmed that there had not. Guidance has been provided.

The PPE income has been reflected, but not the income loss. The Commissioner highlighted the impact on the financial settlement. A flat cash settlement is expected, and cashable savings will also be expected. D Carrington confirmed this is different to last year, and the budget would be tight.

The capital programme reflects the reset budget of £14m (the original programme started out at £20.6m, and this was reduced by £6.5m to reflect priority 1 to 3 schemes). The year to date expenditure is £3.1m across all schemes.

The current projection (excluding the balancing contingency) is £18.9m, which generates a variance of £4.8m. This will be kept under review as the year progresses.

There has been some slippage, the main one being Doncaster police station and custody suite. This is due to delays with the land purchase, along with sewerage issues.

The Commissioner commented that borrowing was currently very low. S Abbott highlighted that investment rates are also low.

13 OLDER VICTIMS OF CRIME

A report of the Chief Constable was presented to the Board. The purpose of the report was to provide an update to the Commissioner concerning crimes that affect older people, and how the force is dealing with this.

L Poultney confirmed that the police are still awaiting a definition of 'older people', but had used the definition used by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS) which is 65+ years' old.

L Poultney highlighted an increasing ageing population. The latest population estimates from the ONS (mid-2019) show that over 65s represent 18.1% of South Yorkshire's population. This has increased from 16.6% shown in 2011. Analysis shows this is because people are living longer, and there is a reduction in births.

The Force has developed a performance dashboard to manage performance in this area.

Some incident types are disproportionately high for over 65s in relation to the wider population. For example, bogus official burglary incidents involving over 65s represent 85% of the Force's total bogus official burglaries, and confused person incidents represent 47% of the total confused person incidents.

The Commissioner enquired if this was because they are at home more, or at home and older. L Poultney confirmed that older people are more trusting and more likely to believe people if they say they are official.

Ongoing activities for the Force's Fraud Coordination Team include identifying vulnerable victims of fraud, conducting assessments and implementing prevention measures - e.g. devices that block malicious telephone calls. Engagement and prevention activities typically include presentations to community groups and events centred on existing themes and emerging threats. However, social distancing measures due to Covid19 mean alternative ways are being used to maintain engagement and awareness. These include social media posts, online articles and hard copy information such as 'The Little Book of Big Scams' booklet.

The Commissioner enquired if the 'Little Book of Big Scams' is available. It is available online, and is being promoted by prevention officers.

L Poultney highlighted the Domestic Abuse Matters training she had attended, which had highlighted the difficulty faced by victims over 60 when leaving the home following splitting from a partner, and the need to understand this better.

The Commissioner confirmed that this needs to be returned to at a later date.

It was agreed that:

- **A further report on crimes affecting older people be brought to a future Public Accountability Board**

14 CYBERCRIME UPDATE

A report of the Chief Constable was presented to the Board. The purpose of the report was to provide the Commissioner with an update on the current position and ongoing plans to improve and enhance Force cyber-crime capabilities.

L Poultney confirmed that technology continues to develop at a pace. This evolution is recognised at a national level. The crime services review seeks to address these challenges.

The central structure is provided through the Digital Intelligence and Investigations Unit (DI&I). This has responsibility to enhance, develop and maintain the Force response surrounding digital investigations, working alongside and co-located with the Digital Forensic Unit (DFU).

L Poultney highlighted that an investigation can involve multiple devices and, whilst the DFU does undertake this work, they still have to outsource mobile device examinations to keep up with current demand.

The Commissioner enquired about the mobile device examination kiosk. This enables staff to obtain details of calls and texts from mobile devices. It is not advanced enough to obtain deleted items, and is used for lower level offences. This has increased efficiencies, by providing early investigative information, reducing both DFU submissions and travelling time. Between November 2017 and October 2020, officers have conducted 16,266 kiosk examinations, which would have previously resulted in submission to the DFU, affecting capacity.

A national 'Cyber Tools App' has been developed, which will provide officers with support and guidance surrounding a number of areas, including investigative considerations, managing digital scenes, crime prevention advice and legislation. The app is currently under review to ensure it is compatible with Force systems.

An app is also under development within the Force, which provides guidance across an extensive range of investigative considerations. This will seek to complement the cyber app, and provide front line officers with a quick, accessible guide.

The licence to train Digital Media Investigator (DMI) courses, secured from the College of Policing, has enabled the training of 48 staff across the Force. The training is in two parts. The first phase has been delivered successfully, but the second element has been delayed following the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Commissioner enquired if there had been an increase in demand during lockdown. The National Fraud Agency (NFA) believes there has been a further 35% increase in demand linked to Covid-19.

L Poultney confirmed that the Force is working really hard to keep pace with the increased demand around cyber-crime, including working with the North East Transformation and Innovation Collaboration (NETIC) of 7 forces in our region.

The Commissioner enquired what investigations are done locally, and which are undertaken nationally. The majority of investigations are undertaken locally. Cyber-attacks are dealt with more nationally.

L Poultney highlighted the prevention work taking place, but acknowledged some people are difficult to reach. The Cyber Protect Officer has provided information to a wide range of organisations and communities, including schools and colleges, on areas including cyber-bullying and the dangers of providing personal information on social media.

The Commissioner confirmed that this needs to be returned to at a later date.

It was agreed that:

- **A further report on cyber-crime be brought to a future Public Accountability Board**

15 PCC DECISIONS

A report of the Chief Executive and Solicitor was presented to the Board. The purpose of the report was to provide the Board with a record of key decisions taken by the Commissioner outside of this Board since the last PAB meeting.

M Buttery highlighted the redirection of funds allocated by the Violence Reduction Unit to the Community Safety Partnerships towards their action plans to prevent or reduce violence in their areas.

The additional funding to improve the core functions of Switchboard, Call Resolution and Dispatch at Atlas Court was also highlighted.

16 UPDATE ON THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

A report of the Chief Executive and Solicitor was presented to the Board. The purpose of the report was to provide an update on the stage reached in the Commissioner reviewing / setting Police and Crime Plan priorities and a supporting budget and council tax precept for 2021/22 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

M Buttery confirmed that this process is led by the Commissioner, but is dependent on joint working with the Force.

Officers from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) are working closely with D Carrington and J Bland from the Force to establish the Chief Constable's assessment of current and future policing need in consultation with District and Department Heads.

M Buttery highlighted that there is going to be some hard choices this year, given the Government funding expected to be made available.

A list is being developed of proposals and possible efficiency savings identified following consultation with the public and partners, for the Commissioner's November Planning and Efficiency Group (PEG).

The Commissioner will present his final precept proposal to the Police and Crime Panel in February 2021, along with any refresh of his Police and Crime Plan.

Following the postponement of the PCC elections in May 2020, the Home Office has confirmed there is no requirement this year for PCCs to issue new Police and Crime Plans. Unless the results of consultation indicate otherwise, the Commissioner here has indicated that the current three strategic policing and crime priorities will continue until the PCC election in 2021.

A further update will be provided at the next meeting.

17 PAB WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme was noted.

18 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no any other business.

19 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

10 December 2020 at 10am.

CHAIR

