

SOUTH YORKSHIRE'S POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD

10 MARCH 2021

PRESENT: Dr Alan Billings (Police and Crime Commissioner)
Michelle Buttery (Chief Executive and Solicitor)
Fiona Topliss (Community Engagement & Communications Manager)
Sophie Abbott (Chief Finance Officer)
Erika Redfearn (Head of Governance)
Sally Parkin (Governance and Compliance Manager)
Mark Roberts (Deputy Chief Constable)
David Hartley (Assistant Chief Constable)
Tim Forber (Assistant Chief Constable)
Lauren Poultney (Assistant Chief Constable)
Debbie Carrington (Interim Director of Finance)
Alison Fletcher (Office Manager)
Kirsty Haken (Deputy Head of Corporate Communications)
Steve Chapman (Chief Superintendent, Rotherham)
Lynn Knox (Superintendent, Rotherham)
Rachel Staniforth (Head of the Violence Reduction Unit)
Graham Jones (Head of the Violence Reduction Unit)
Mark Miller (Violence Reduction Unit)
A Macaskill (Interim Chair of the Independent Ethics Panel)
Steve Wragg (Chair of the Joint Independent Audit Committee)
Councillor Garry Weatherall (Sheffield City Council)

APOLOGIES: S Watson, K Wright and C Goodwin

1 **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The Commissioner welcomed those who had joined the meeting, including Councillors Steinke a member of the Police and Crime Panel, Councillor Khayum and one member of the press (L Ashton).

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**

The Commissioner congratulated Deputy Chief Constable M Roberts on being chosen as the preferred candidate to take up the position of Cheshire's Chief Constable.

The Commissioner thanked him for the contribution that he has made. He highlighted how critical the role of Deputy Chief Constable is in South Yorkshire. South Yorkshire was not in a very good place a few years ago and M Roberts has been part of the senior leadership team that has played a crucial part in making significant improvements to SYP's performance.

M Roberts thanked the Commissioner for his comments. He confirmed that working in South Yorkshire has been one of his career highlights. He is proud of the officers and staff and what they have achieved.

The Commissioner congratulated L Dudley, from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, on the birth of her daughter.

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 9 FEBRUARY 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2021 were agreed as an accurate record.

9 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD HELD ON 24 FEBRUARY 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2021 were agreed as an accurate record subject to the following amendment:

ACC Lauren Poultney be added to the attendance list.

10 MATTERS ARISING/ACTIONS

396	The Commissioner's Office would establish if Sheffield City Council are considering a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) in the Page Hall area. 09/02/21 - The Commissioner has written to Cllr Johnson, the
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	<p>Leader of Sheffield City Council. Both the Commissioner and Chief Constable have met with Kate Josephs, the Chief Executive of Sheffield City Council. SYP and Sheffield City Council continue to liaise about this. The Chief Constable confirmed that whilst SYP would like a PSPO this needs to be part of a wider plan.</p> <p>10/03/21 – The Commissioner and ACC T Forber are meeting with Cllr Wood and K Josephs next week. Ongoing</p>
401	<p>S Baldwin would look into whether telephone devices which block calls are still available.</p> <p>09/02/21 – The Commissioner had provided funding in 2018/19 for 25 devices as a proof of concept. These can be recycled and redistributed. This can be still purchased. SYP has recently purchased some BT blocker phones which they use for dementia sufferers. DISCHARGED</p>
402	<p>M Palin would establish whether the downward trend in commercial burglary was taking place nationally</p> <p>04/03/21 – The trend in Doncaster and South Yorkshire is mirrored nationally and within our Most Similar Group. Whilst it has been suggested that Covid-19 will have impacted on the volumes, given that there are more empty shops but less people about, the actual trend downwards does appear to have started before the pandemic so Covid-19 potentially is not a major factor. Volumes for all forces have been compared from Jan-Dec 2019 v 2020 and all forces are showing a reduction (except for one). Figures for 2018 v 2019 also show the majority of forces demonstrated a decrease in volumes with only 13 forces showing an increase of which South Yorkshire was one. DISCHARGED</p>
403	<p>D Hartley would establish if the online portal was available in other languages</p> <p>04/03/21 - The online portal is not currently available in other languages. Work is ongoing looking at options for a multi-lingual approach across the whole online provision.</p> <p>The Commissioner enquired if there was any time frame. Not at the moment. DISCHARGED</p>
404	<p>D Hartley would establish if victims could be identified via the online portal and referred to Victim Support.</p> <p>04/03/21 - No. The online submission of forms does not provide sufficient information to identify a need for a referral to victim support. Where the nature of the submission elicits a call back then the agent can make a referral to victim support if appropriate. The online “web chat” is more likely to identify a need through the text conversation and the agent would be in a position to either provide victim support information/links via the web chat, or make the necessary referral. However, staff are trained to make referrals from the information provided. DISCHARGED</p>
405	<p>D Thorpe would establish how South Yorkshire’s suicide rates compared nationally.</p>

	04/03/21 - D Thorpe provided the Commissioner with an update on 12 February 2021 and provided the requested information from ONS data. A summary of the information provided will be available for the next meeting. Ongoing.
406	An update report on Stalking Protection Orders be brought back to the Public Accountability Board in 12 months' time 25/02/2021 - Added to Work Programme for February 2022 - DISCHARGE
407	T Forber would establish how many people are available to sit on Community Justice Panels. 05/03/21 - The current situation across South Yorkshire with regards to community justice panels is varied, with limited use: Rotherham have a coordinator within Community Safety, and a small pool of volunteers (approximately 8). Barnsley local authority has recently funded and recruited an individual to oversee the community justice panel referrals, but new in post January 2021 and no volunteers. Doncaster, community justice panels are the responsibility of the Violence Reduction Unit Partnership Manager. The member of staff has been given the role on a temporary basis to oversee the panels. There are currently no volunteers trained for the role in Doncaster as it was paused due to COVID. Sheffield have a member of staff who has been overseeing the community neighbourhood disputes long term. However, the situation has been fluid for many months due to the staff members absence from work, on/off for some time now. Exact number of volunteers not known. DISCHARGED
408	The Commissioner would, when appropriate, encourage members of the public to volunteer to work with SYP. 10/03/21 – Noted. DISCHARGED

11 FORCE PERFORMANCE ROTHERHAM DISTRICT SUMMARY

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

The Commissioner enquired about problem solving. This is where local neighbourhood policing teams work with partners to adopt long-term problem-solving approaches to local community issues. This is at a strategic and operational level.

S Chapman highlighted the Clifton Park area where a number of burglaries had taken place. SYP have worked with the local authority to develop a problem-solving plan which included putting up signs, looking at street lighting, providing crime prevention advice and the issuing of Smart Water kits. Over 200 people accepted the offer of Smart Water. There was also a re-focus on perpetrators with three prolific offenders being arrested.

The Commissioner highlighted response officers being seconded to the criminal investigation department and enquired if this was sustainable. S Chapman confirmed that it was and highlighted the importance of teams not working in isolation. He highlighted the link between the teams. Neighbourhood policing teams undertake problem solving and engagement and the criminal investigation department investigate.

The Commissioner highlighted the comment about unemployment allowing criminals to exploit those who may be financially vulnerable and enquired what SYP's response is to this is. S Chapman confirmed that SYP expect to see a shift in demand once lockdown is eased with more people at work and the reintroduction of the night-time economy. SYP will change its resource profile. He confirmed that neighbourhood policing is fit for purpose and does have an enforcement element.

L Knox highlighted the sale of fake goods. SYP is encouraging members of the public to report anonymously on any activity linked to suspicious behaviour. This will ensure intelligence is gathered in the right areas to help SYP prepare for the move out of lockdown.

T Forber confirmed that SYP are also aware of the hidden harm such as rape and serious sexual offending. Some of this will increase as a result of the re-introduction of the night-time economy.

The Commissioner highlighted the Rotherham Violence Reduction Unit Partnership Manager who has co-ordinated a five week pilot. S Chapman confirmed that whilst Operation Keepsafe is a pilot in the north of the district this is already utilised across the rest of the district. This takes young people away from anti-social behaviour by focusing on engagement, providing education and advice and signposting to positive diversionary activities.

The Commissioner highlighted the downward trend in recorded domestic abuse and enquired if this was positive or not. S Chapman confirmed that domestic abuse figures are being monitored closely. The District is aware that victims can be isolated with their abusers during the current lockdown and provides many opportunities to report domestic violence, including online and via social media. Reports of domestic abuse are dealt with quickly and appropriately. The Commissioner enquired if SYP expected an increase in reports of domestic abuse when lockdown ends. S Chapman confirmed that he did.

M Roberts confirmed that nationally the service anticipates an increase in demand once the night-time economy re-starts. It would be helpful if the re-introduction of the night-time economy could be undertaken in a phased manner. Whilst he acknowledged that businesses need to re-open he would like a sensible approach.

M Roberts also highlighted the UEFA European Football Championship due to take place in June / July 2020 and the impact this will have on staff. The police usually see an increase in domestic violence and alcohol related crime during this time.

There may also be an increase in protests.

The Commissioner raised the impact of domestic abuse on children and highlighted the Domestic Abuse Bill going through Parliament which is extended to children. This will make a big difference. He enquired if children ever report to the police. S Chapman highlighted the Encompass scheme which links into schools.

The use of Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPO) was highlighted. The Commissioner enquired if nine a month was about right or whether this could be increased. S Chapman confirmed that he would like this to increase. DA Matters training is being delivered to all frontline staff. At the heart of this training is to create time and space for the victim which DVPOs provide.

T Forber confirmed that SYP are on a journey. Previously SYP had been one of the forces where these were used the least. They are now one of the forces that uses them the most. The use of DVPOs are monitored at quarterly performance days.

The Commissioner referred to a joint letter written by himself and the Chief Constable in relation to the cost of applying for a DVPO. He enquired if there were any budgetary constraints. T Forber confirmed that the cost of a DVPO would never be put ahead of a victim but the less SYP can spend on these the more money there is available to spend in other areas.

The Commissioner enquired what happens if someone breaches the DVPO. S Chapman confirmed that the neighbourhood policing teams proactively look for breaches and arrests are made.

The Commissioner highlighted the videos to increase awareness and offer advice on child and criminal exploitation produced for Safeguarding Week. He enquired if these could be made available to parents. S Chapman confirmed that they could.

The Commissioner enquired about the work taking place with pharmacies to deliver advice on fraud / scams. L Knox highlighted that because of the Covid-19 pandemic a large number of people were unable to leave their homes and are potentially vulnerable to fraud and scams. To increase engagement with this vulnerable group a leaflet is now being delivered with prescriptions which provides crime prevention advice.

The Commissioner referred to Organised Crime Groups exploiting young people and enquired if every school has a dedicated police resource. S Chapman confirmed that every school has a named person that the school can engage with.

The Commissioner highlighted the fall in residential burglaries and the increase in theft of / from motor vehicles, particularly transit vans. He enquired if perpetrators had moved from one to the other. S Chapman confirmed that SYP had seen a change in trend as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Vehicle theft is a way for criminals to increase their income. There has been a number of arrests in Rotherham which has resulted in a reduction in vehicle thefts.

T Forber confirmed SYP has seen a general increase in both vehicle and dog thefts. This is driven by serious acquisitive crime and is usually fuelled by drug use.

S Chapman commented that dog thefts is a very emotive subject. There have been 63 recorded dog thefts across South Yorkshire, 10 in Rotherham, although there appears to be a lot more on social media. He confirmed that SYP do take dog theft seriously and want to hear about this. He urged people to report this.

The Commissioner thanked S Chapman for the report.

12 FORCE PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN 2017 - 2021 (RENEWED 2019) - TREATING PEOPLE FAIRLY

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 'Treating People Fairly' outcome 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.

T Forber reminded the Board that SYP had been graded good across the board and outstanding for ethical behaviour by HMICFRS.

T Forber highlighted the challenges and amount of work taking place to increase police officer numbers.

SYP has met the National Uplift target for 2020/21. 308 officers have been recruited into the organisation. There are a further 700 applications currently awaiting assessment and 135 awaiting interview. T Forber highlighted the quality of applicants.

There are a number of police officer entry methods including the Policing Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF) and degree entry.

SYP recognise that in a few years there will be a very inexperienced work force. Training is being delivered in partnership with Sheffield Hallam University and involves spending time on response, a neighbourhood policing team and undertaking investigations. This will mean more experienced officers at the end of the programme.

T Forber highlighted the number of tutors required to train all the new officers. A new Workplace Tutor Academy Programme has recently been launched; designed to up-skill tutors.

The Commissioner highlighted the Detective Now and Police Now schemes and enquired how these worked. T Forber confirmed that the schemes are run by a not for profit company and police forces buy officers. This runs alongside SYP's recruitment campaign. This scheme appears to have more success around the diversity of candidates. Officers obtained via this scheme can be put directly into specialist areas.

SYP have identified a gap in Protecting Vulnerable People and are engaging with the Detective Now programme so that officers can become trainee detectives from day one.

T Forber confirmed he was pleased with the position SYP are in.

T Forber acknowledged that the experience of young people in custody is very different. He highlighted steps which had been put in place to support juveniles brought into custody. These include discreet booking in desks and bespoke initial and pre-release risk assessments.

T Forber highlighted hate crime. SYP recognise that a hate crime is a very different experience, however minor, if it is motivated hate. The experience for the victim is acute.

Hate crime spiked over the summer. This was alongside the UK's exit from the European Union and the rise in prominence of the Black Lives Matter movement.

All hate crime investigations get scrutinised by local command teams.

It is often not possible to solve hate crimes but the service SYP provide to victims of hate crime is important. 92% of victims were satisfied with the initial contact and 89% satisfied with the treatment they were given.

The Commissioner highlighted that hate crime is under reported and expressed concern that hate crime appeared to be reducing. T Forber acknowledged hate crime was under reported and confirmed it was unlikely that hate crime is reducing. He highlighted the work Chief Superintendent Poolman, SYP's Hate Crime lead, had undertaken around the service provided to victims of hate crime and encouraging people to come forward.

T Forber confirmed that SYP does take hate crime seriously and encouraged people to report hate crime.

The Commissioner enquired about the diversity of SYP's workforce in comparison with other forces. T Forber confirmed that the ratio of female to male officers was good but acknowledged SYP has more to do in relation to BME and VME officers. There has been a slow increase in BME and VME officers but this is not enough. Other forces appear to make better use of local neighbourhood policing teams in their recruitment campaigns. Recruitment is now a standing agenda item on the Neighbourhood Policing Board. This alongside the Police Now scheme should see better results. This is something all forces are struggling with.

M Roberts agreed with T Forber and confirmed that SYP recognise that more needs to be done. Advertising campaigns have been successful. Online mentoring is also provided to give support to people and each stage of the recruitment process is monitored.

A Macaskill confirmed that this was an area that new members of the PCC's Independent Ethics Panel want to look at.

The Commissioner thanked T Forber for the very full report.

13 VRU UPDATE REPORT AND PRESENTATION

A report of the Head of the Violence Reduction Unit was presented to the Board. The purpose of the report was to provide an update on the progress of the South Yorkshire Violence Reduction Unit (VRU).

The Commissioner highlighted that R Staniforth is moving on from her role as Head of the VRU and returning back to her role within Public Health. He thanked her for all the work she had done with Superintendent Lee Berry in establishing the Unit. This has been undertaken in a short period of time whilst there was uncertainty around funding.

He thanked R Staniforth for her vision and enthusiasm. She is nationally, very well thought of including by the Home Office.

The Commissioner confirmed that he was sorry that she is leaving and wished her well in the future.

R Staniforth thanked the Commissioner and confirmed that it has been a pleasure working with everyone.

The Commissioner welcomed Graham Jones, the newly appointed permanent Head of the VRU, Graham has come from the National Probation Service. He will take forward what has been put in place and build on embedding a sustainable partnership approach to tackling serious violence.

R Staniforth highlighted the following three projects.

Trauma Informed South Yorkshire

The training package has been written by Sheffield City Council.

The South Yorkshire VRU is supporting with trainer time to roll the training out. There are 25 sessions being delivered throughout quarter 4 which will result in approximately 800 people being trained. Initial evaluation of the training is excellent.

Trauma informed practice within SYP is also progressing well with new police officers receiving trauma awareness during the degree course, uniformed officers receiving awareness sessions as part of continuous professional development and plans for other areas of SYP are in progress including training for sergeants/detectives, call handlers, officers involved with missing persons and custody suite staff.

Trauma informed practice is very important to ensure people are being treated fairly. It also recognises that everyone will have experienced some form of trauma in their lives.

Shed Load of Cake

The Sheffield Partnership Manager for the South Yorkshire VRU has been working with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to secure external funding from their Flexible Support Fund for five community kitchen projects across South Yorkshire to train ex-offenders in catering and life skills.

Emergency support for young people

In January 2021 an additional sum of money was offered to Violence Reduction Units to award to local charities and social enterprises with the aim of supporting young people out of violence or at risk of violence. This funding is particularly needed at the moment with local people and the organisations that support them being severely affected by Covid-19 restrictions.

The Commissioner commented that the funding was welcome but highlighted the short timescale in which the funding had to be used. The whole of the last 12 months had been difficult as a result of Covid-19 restrictions.

L Poultney thanked R Staniforth for her commitment, passion and energy. She also highlighted the new direction R Staniforth had brought to SYP's Women's Network.

G Jones acknowledged that as the incoming Head of the VRU he had been fortunate to have a three week handover with R Staniforth. He confirmed that his background had been with the Probation Service.

It has been announced that the South Yorkshire VRU will received £1.6m over the next financial year. The detail of the bid has yet to be announced but work is taking place to prepare for this.

The VRU will be looking to continue joint working with partner agencies, including building stronger links with SYP's enforcement activity (Surge funding) and problem solving approaches, and extending those commissioned interventions to prevent the causes of crime that are shown to work.

G Jones confirmed that he is looking forward to working with everyone.

14 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 that there are four decisions to draw to the attention of PAB.

The Commissioner reiterated the number of small pots of money that had become available over the year and the short timescales in which the funding needs to be spent. There are some good schemes but more money over a longer period of time would give more sustainability.

15 PAB WORK PROGRAMME

M Buttery highlighted the work programme.

The PCC elections are scheduled to take place in May 2021. A revised work programme will be published following the election.

M Buttery requested that the Value for Money Strategy, on the work programme for April, be deferred to a later date.

It was agreed that:

- **The Value for Money Strategy be deferred to a later date**

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

There was no any other business.

17 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

9 April 2021 at 1pm.

CHAIR



10 March 2021