

SOUTH YORKSHIRE'S POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD

6 SEPTEMBER 2021

PRESENT: Dr Alan Billings (Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC))
Michelle Buttery (PCC's Chief Executive & Solicitor)
Sophie Abbott (PCC's Chief Finance Officer)
Fiona Topliss (PCC's Engagement & Communications Manager)
Sally Parkin (PCC's Governance & Compliance Manager)
Ellie Parkinson (PCC's Performance and Assurance Officer)
Sharon Baldwin (PCC's Evaluation and Scrutiny Officer)
Lauren Poultney (Chief Constable)
Tim Forber (Deputy Chief Constable)
David Hartley (Assistant Chief Constable)
Dan Thorpe (Temporary Assistant Chief Constable)
Jackie Bland (SYP's Director of Resources)
Shelley Hemsley (Chief Superintendent, Sheffield)
Deborah Carrington (SYP's Chief Finance Officer)
Alison Fletcher (SYP's SCT Office Manager)
Carrie Goodwin (SYP's Head of Corporate Communications)
Graham Jones (Head of the Violence Reduction Unit)
Jessica Adams (Violence Reduction Unit)
Ann Macaskill (Chair of the Independent Ethics Panel)
Steve Wragg (Chair of the Joint Independent Audit Committee)

APOLOGIES: E Redfearn, S Poolman

1 **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The Commissioner informed attendees that this was a 'hybrid' meeting (mixed physical meeting with some joining virtually via MS Teams), and he welcomed those who had joined the meeting.

The Commissioner introduced the following people, who had attended the meeting in person; Deputy Chief Constable Forber, T/Assistant Chief Constable Thorpe; Chief Superintendent Hemsley, M Buttery, F Topliss and S Parkin.

2 **FILMING NOTIFICATION**

The Commissioner confirmed that the meeting was being streamed live on YouTube (SYPCC Media) and was being recorded and uploaded via YouTube to the website (www.southyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk/) where it could be viewed at a later date.

3 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Commissioner congratulated S Hemsley and S Chapman on becoming substantive Chief Superintendents and C Macfarlane and S Wanless on their promotions to Chief Superintendent.

The Commissioner congratulated R Staniforth, the previous Head of the Violence Reduction Unit, on the birth of her baby boy.

4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The following public question had been received:

“The Chief Constable's report on Treating People Fairly states that the results of the Crime Survey for England and Wales to March 2020 show that 59.5% of respondents in South Yorkshire agreed the police treat people fairly. This means that over 40% of respondents feel that people are **not** treated fairly.

Given the commitment in the Police and Crime Plan to treating people fairly, what steps will the PCC take to ensure that SYP make improvements in this important aspect of their performance?”

The Commissioner highlighted that this did not mean that 40% are dissatisfied. There were other options and some chose not to respond. The Commissioner acknowledged that 60% of respondents in South Yorkshire was good but this could be improved.

D Thorpe provided the following response:

The assertion that 40% of the public believe the police don't treat people fairly is inaccurate. As suggested below the 40% is primarily made up of neutral responses – the survey is asked to a random selection of the public, many of whom will not have had any contact with the police and may, therefore, have no firm evidence to shape their view.

Unfortunately we don't get the full break down of data from the national crime survey, however we do have the same question within our own Your Voice Counts survey, which we use to help provide more detailed and more local level analysis. Over the last 12 months 65% of respondents agreed the police treat people fairly, 28% were neutral and only 7% disagreed.

Within our victim satisfaction survey, where a service has been received, 92% of respondents stated that they had been treated fairly.

We take a number of survey's into account locally in attempts to get a good understanding as to how the public feel about our service as we are always seeking ways to improve.

5 URGENT ITEMS

The Commissioner invited SYP to provide an update on the police response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

D Hartley confirmed that there is a period of stability. There is no enforcement activity taking place. The challenge is around the general increase in demand and the resources to meet it. The latest staffing figures show that SYP is in the strongest position since the pandemic. He highlighted that the virus is still with us and that some staff are off as a result of catching Covid-19. A full policing service continues to be delivered. SYP are expecting another spike in infection rates in the next three weeks following people returning to education.

T Forber confirmed that it had been a very busy summer. If you look purely at the numbers, the number of incidents is not dissimilar to last year, but there is a significant increase in crime related incidents and, if you overlay this with some of the challenges around staffing and Covid-19 extractions, it is challenging. There has been an impact following the unlocking of the night time economy, events over the summer and the return of football matches. Plans have been in place to increase staffing at weekends to maintain levels of performance. He acknowledged how hard officers are working and confirmed that SYP are very proud of its workforce.

The Commissioner confirmed that he was very grateful for all the hard work taking place.

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 AUGUST 2021

The notes were agreed as an accurate record subject to a number of minor amendments being made.

9 MATTERS ARISING/ACTIONS

419	Information on the burglary reduction pilot evaluated by Lancaster University would be provided to the PCC. 06/09/21 – result would be provided when available. Ongoing
420	T Forber would obtain the number of partial closure orders which had been issued this year 06/09/21 – T Forber confirmed that there had been 19 cases since the 1 January 2021. Eight full closures and 11 partial closures. Discharged
421	Dip-sample information of different crime categories would be provided to the PCC. 06/09/21 – this will be provided in due course. Ongoing

422	<p>D Thorpe would establish what work was taking place nationally with Children's Homes to reduce missing persons 03/09/21 – D Thorpe provided the following update: I am pleased to update PAB that the work that I began in South Yorkshire is very much still ongoing. A draft framework was produced and circulated nationally for wider consultation through policing, ADCS, LGA, Ofsted, DfE and third sector organisations. It is hoped that we can have the framework published before the end of the year with both Home Office and DfE support. At present the group developing the framework is considering the feedback and will likely make some minor amendments to the draft prior to publishing later this year.</p> <p>In summary, the overall aim of this guidance is to ensure that all children in the care of the local authority receive an appropriate and timely response, which is competent, compassionate, and consistent when they are not where they are expected to be; and that everything possible is done by all multi agency partners to reduce risk and harm, enable a child's safe return and prevent repeat missing occurrences. To aid this, local area Safeguarding Partnership arrangements should have clear and accessible Missing Children policies and procedures in place, alongside learning and development pathways to ensure practitioners and carers respond appropriately to missing occurrences and are confident in their decision making, together with a Missing Children Escalation policy.</p> <p>Missing Children Escalation policies should detail a clear pathway to enable partner agencies to raise and resolve concerns, including issues such as, over reporting of children as missing, resource issues which impact on responding to children, concerns held regarding agency response and settings, and professional difference regarding responses to individual children.</p> <p>This guidance cannot anticipate each situation or set of circumstances which surround every missing occurrence. Responding to looked after children who are not where they are expected to be and/or who are reported as missing, should be based on high quality individualised child centred needs-led assessments of vulnerability and risk, which inform and guide professional response.</p> <p>This guidance covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partnerships and Accountability• Prevention and planning;• Responding to missing occurrences;• When a child is found or returns. <p>It relates to all children under the age of 18 who are in the care</p>
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	of the local authority and reside in a care setting.
423	D Hartley would consider the possibility of having an anonymous reporting line 06/09/21 – The Commissioner confirmed that this had been highlighted by members of the public. D Hartley informed the Commissioner that an early review had taken place at Atlas Court. There does not appear to be a significant gap between information being reported to Crime Stoppers and this being passed to SYP. Further information will be provided at the next meeting. Ongoing

10 FORCE PERFORMANCE - SHEFFIELD DISTRICT SUMMARY REPORT

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 Sheffield, in line with the reporting requirements.

The Commissioner thanked S Hemsley for the report.

The Commissioner highlighted the increase in domestic abuse and that there had been a slight reduction in arrest rates. S Hemsley confirmed that there had been an increase in crime and non-crime incidents in Sheffield. Arrest rates remain at around 50% but there has been a slight decrease. The message to staff is to arrest to ensure victims are safeguarded. Sheffield has a small dedicated domestic abuse team, who engage daily with victims and deal with arrested domestic abuse suspects whilst in custody. The team is successful and Sheffield is reviewing how to increase their capacity to deal with more investigations and improve outcomes for domestic abuse victims. The team is led by a dedicated detective inspector, who participates in and shares chairing responsibilities for the Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and the Multi-agency Tasking and Co-ordinating Conference (MATAC).

The Commissioner highlighted the increase in domestic violence reported nationally during lockdown, and commented that the report did not seem to reflect this. S Hemsley confirmed that Sheffield had seen an increase in domestic abuse at times, but had not seen the spike which had been highlighted. Not everyone would have been able to seek support during lockdown.

T Forber confirmed that domestic abuse is a hidden crime. All the evidence suggests domestic abuse victims are victims before they report this to the police. Domestic abuse is a priority for SYP. SYP are seeking to work with partners to address domestic abuse as early as possible.

The full extent of the impact of Covid-19 on domestic abuse will not be seen for some time. There was a reduction in third party reporting as a result of some charities having to provide a reduced service during lockdown, and schools not being open.

T Forber confirmed that SYP has a good infrastructure in place to match demand in the future.

The Commissioner highlighted children being taken into police protection if they present as 'at risk' at domestic abuse incidents. S Hemsley confirmed that this is

not just in cases of domestic abuse and is not undertaken often. This is to safeguard the child.

T Forber confirmed that the Domestic Abuse Matters training given to officers talks about the voice of the child. Operation Encompass, which complements and enhances existing safeguarding procedures by sharing vital information from the police to schools and colleges, is also in place.

The Commissioner highlighted Scotland as an emerging destination for the phenomena of county lines exporting from urban areas including Sheffield. S Hemsley confirmed that Scotland is not the only area. The Fortify Team are developing intelligence around several exported county lines by Sheffield offenders including to surrounding counties and to Scotland. The children recruited within county lines do not feel that they are victims, but SYP will treat them as a missing person and, once recovered, will investigate the circumstances and make a referral.

The Commissioner highlighted the police inspectors reviewing all rapes and serious sexual offences (RASSO) and domestic abuse investigations where the victim does not support prosecution. These inspectors establish whether an 'evidence led prosecution' (prosecutions involving identified victim contact offences but with no formal evidence from the victim) would be appropriate, if further victim support is required and if the outcome truly reflects the victim's wishes. The Commissioner enquired what is being found. S Hemsley highlighted the importance of this work. No specific lessons have been learnt so far.

The Commissioner enquired if support to victims was offered again if this had been declined originally. Support is offered by Independent Sexual Violence Advocates (ISVAs) and Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs). There is a process in place to ensure that support is offered.

The Commissioner highlighted the positive work being undertaken to tackle armed criminality. S Hemsley highlighted the covert operation which had taken place at the beginning of June.

The Commissioner acknowledged the 51% decrease in the number of firearms discharges in Sheffield during the 7 months from January to July 2021. T Forber highlighted the important work of the Neighbourhood Policing Team in sustaining the positive work that has taken place.

The Commissioner highlighted the new Area Committees being set up by Sheffield City Council. S Hemsley confirmed that each local inspector is linked into these.

The Commissioner highlighted the Albanian nominal who had been arrested in connection with the fatal stabbing on Earl Marshall Road, Sheffield. He enquired if these people are here illegally. T Forber confirmed that SYP do take steps to deport people if appropriate and there is a well-established process in place for all foreign nationals.

The Commissioner highlighted the 36% reduction in residential burglary and enquired if this is sustainable. S Hemsley acknowledged that some of this is attributed to a small team of officers dealing with residential burglary.

S Hemsley highlighted the North West Neighbourhood Policing Team who had undertaken some good work in the student areas of Sheffield. There are also plans

in place to engage with new and returning students to inform them of a number of crime reduction initiatives.

The Commissioner highlighted the difficulty with the perception of hate crime. If hate crime increases this could be because people have more confidence in reporting, and if it goes down this can also be seen as a positive. S Hemsley confirmed that Sheffield do take hate crime seriously. Chief Inspector Helen Lewis leads on hate crime for Sheffield and is working with University managers to improve hate crime reporting. Neighbourhood Policing Teams are allocated hate crimes to enable them to understand the impact of the crime and identify offenders.

The Commissioner highlighted the decision to recruit a police officer rather than a support staff Hate Crime Coordinator. S Hemsley explained that, historically, the Hate Crime Coordinator has been funded from Community Safety funding on a short term contract which has led to instability. A police officer will bring continuity of service and stability.

The Commissioner enquired how easy it is to contact the local police. S Hemsley confirmed that SYP had been working hard over the last few weeks to ensure the website is up to date.

The Commissioner highlighted the use of volunteers to provide high visibility speed checks, and enquired who these were. S Hemsley responded that these are usually members of the public who are concerned about speeding in their local area and willing to help the police. They are usually already in touch with the local Neighbourhood Policing Team. If anyone is interested in volunteering they should contact their local Neighbourhood Policing Team.

The Commissioner enquired about stop and search scrutiny. S Hemsley confirmed that the Independent Ethics Panel (IEP) had undertaken scrutiny of Body Worn Video (BWV). The Independent Advisory Group had scrutinised sanitised reports.

T Forber confirmed that SYP wanted to be as open and transparent as possible and welcomed healthy scrutiny. The IEP has helpfully taken the time to view BWV but, moving forward, he would like volunteers to get involved in.

D Thorpe confirmed that 25% of stop and searches result in a positive outcome. T Forber confirmed that the outcome rate is important but it is also about the way the officers speak to members of the public.

The Commissioner highlighted that members of the public had contacted him about drink spiking. S Hemsley confirmed that they had received a number of reports following the opening of the night-time economy. Work is taking place with partners, including licensees, about getting the right messages out to people about this. Officers are also out and about looking for people who are potentially vulnerable.

M Buttery highlighted the work taking place led from the Commissioner's office, including a bid for additional funding to protect women and girls (Safer Streets and other funding) and a round-table discussion with partners to map activity against the Government's new Violence against Women and Girls Strategy and see what else was required. This work is being led by the Head of the Violence Reduction Unit.

11 FORCE PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN 2021 - 2024
(UPDATED JUNE 2021) 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' priority within 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 that SYP has recently invested in recruiting a Positive Action Advisor to focus on improving representation from under-represented groups across the organisation. T Forber confirmed that SYP had made good progress in relation to increasing female representation, but this has not been the same for people from Black and ethnic minority backgrounds. He highlighted what a great career the police is.

The Chief Constable informed the Commissioner that the latest recruitment campaign had just closed. The day before it closed, 720 applications had been received. The assessment has not yet been undertaken, but this had been a really targeted campaign aimed at diverse communities.

The Commissioner enquired about a new process that has been established where leavers are invited to undertake an exit interview with a member of SYP's Organisational Development and Culture team. T Forber confirmed that SYP had recruited an Organisational Development Specialist. SYP is interested in work based cultural issues, and why officers are leaving the Force early. Since the beginning of July, 42 leavers were offered an exit interview, 17 accepted, 6 declined and the remainder did not respond. This will continue to be monitored and will help to identify any themes or trends.

The Commissioner highlighted the Sergeants' Development Programme. T Forber confirmed that, in January, he had chaired the inspector's promotion process. The number of candidates for both inspectors and sergeants was low. He acknowledged that SYP's demographics is changing, and this is resulting in more officers being promoted quite young in service. The Sergeants' Development Programme will enable SYP to set corporate standards and strengthen frontline supervision.

The Commissioner enquired if the Sergeants' Pledge was still being used. The Chief Constable confirmed that this had been revised and will be continuing.

The Commissioner enquired how the new Victims' Code of Practice (VCOP) was progressing. T Forber confirmed that the new Code enhances the rights of victims. The National Victim and Witness Performance Sub-Group are working on developing a National Performance Framework to measure compliance against the Code. This is being monitored at SYP performance days.

The Commissioner enquired if Tasers are monitored as part of the Use of Force data. T Forber confirmed that every use of force is recorded, including Taser discharges. Internal scrutiny and oversight takes place including dip-sampling. To support external oversight and governance – scrutiny is also in place through the

Independent Ethics Panel, and Independent Advisory Groups to ensure transparency to local communities.

12 PCC DECISIONS

A report of the Chief Executive & 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 informed the Commissioner that there was only one decision of public interest. This related to dedicated administration and finance support across the Violence Reduction Unit and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

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

None.

14 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

13 October 2021 at 2.30pm.

CHAIR

