

# **SOUTH YORKSHIRE'S POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

## **PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD**

**9 APRIL 2021**

PRESENT: Dr Alan Billings (Police and Crime Commissioner)  
Sophie Abbott (Chief Finance Officer)  
Sally Parkin (Governance and Compliance Manager)  
Ellie Parkinson (Performance and Assurance Officer)  
Kevin Wright (Evaluation and Scrutiny Officer)  
Stephen Watson (Chief Constable)  
Mark Roberts (Deputy Chief Constable)  
Jackie Bland (Director of Resources)  
Tim Forber (Assistant Chief Constable)  
Alison Fletcher (Office Manager)  
Kirsty Haken (Deputy Head of Corporate Communications)  
Sarah Poolman (Chief Superintendent, Barnsley)  
Alice Boucher (Police Constable)  
Ian Bailey (Violence Reduction Unit)  
A Macaskill (Interim Chair of the Independent Ethics Panel)  
Steve Wragg (Chair of the Joint Independent Audit Committee)

APOLOGIES: M Buttery, F Topliss, E Redfearn, L Poultney, D Hartley, D Carrington and Cllr Gary Weatherall

### **1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The Commissioner welcomed those who had joined the meeting, including Councillors Steinke and Short members of the Police and Crime Panel.

One minute silence was observed following the announcement that Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh had died.

### **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 Chief Constable S Watson on his appointment as Chief Constable in Greater Manchester Police.

### **4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

The Commissioner informed the Board that the following question had been submitted by a member of the public.

*“I would like to ask a public question at the next South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner's Public Accountability Board. If there is a process that must be followed so my question is raised and published at the next meeting please can you advise me of it.”*

The Commissioner confirmed that the below written response had been prepared and would be provided to the member of the public.

As PCC I have a statutory duty to consult people in South Yorkshire each year about the proposed policing budget for the coming financial year and the precept. The legislation does not prescribe how this consultation should be done.

It would be prohibitively expensive to contact everyone or even to commission a county-wide survey through, say, an opinion poll organisation.

I do what I can with the means available. These are chiefly:

1. I have engagement officers who speak directly to the public to gauge their views. They present the public with a range of options. This activity has been much reduced this year because of the restrictions around coronavirus. But there was general support for paying more for policing.
2. In a normal year I would be meeting with many organisations of different kinds – from parish councils to community groups – and would get some sense from them about what they would be prepared to pay for policing. For this current year – 1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021 – I reached the conclusion that the precept increase should be held at 2%. This time, I have had fewer meetings of this kind and they have almost all been held remotely. Nevertheless, there was a great deal of support for the police and an appreciation of what they had done during the last year of the pandemic.
3. I also consult the District council leaders for Sheffield, Rotherham, Doncaster and Barnsley – and they represent to me the views of people in their areas. These discussions range from what the council tax increase might be through to what their constituents expect to see for their money.
4. I speak to or communicate with MPs and have similar conversations.
5. I hold an on-line survey. This cannot be a ‘scientific’ survey, since it is not a representative sample but consists of those who respond to the invitation to take part. Nevertheless, I learn from it, not least in what people say in some of their answers to questions. This year we had more people take part than in previous years. They were supportive of the increase in precept.
6. Finally, when all the above has happened, I have to present my proposals to the Police and Crime Panel and seek their views. The panel consists of local councillors from each of the four Districts in South Yorkshire, with four different political allegiances, and independent members. This year, for the first time in my time as PCC, the panel approved the proposals unanimously.

If the member of public can suggest a better – but no more expensive – way of consulting, I would be very happy to consider it for next time.

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 10 MARCH 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2021 were agreed as an accurate record.

9 MATTERS ARISING/ACTIONS

396	<p>The Commissioner's Office would establish if Sheffield City Council are considering a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) in the Page Hall area.</p> <p>09/02/21 - The Commissioner has written to Cllr Johnson, the 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> <p>09/04/21 – T Forber confirmed that he had met with Cllr Paul Wood and Superintendent Simon Verrell earlier in the week. This is now going to the local authority's legal department for them to take forward.</p>
405	<p>D Thorpe would establish how South Yorkshire's suicide rates compared nationally.</p> <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.</p> <p>10/03/21 - 10/03/21 - Summary of the information provided.</p> <p>DISCHARGED</p>
409	<p>The Value for Money Strategy be deferred to a later date.</p> <p>30/03/21 - To be included in revised work programme.</p> <p>DISCHARGED</p>

10 FORCE PERFORMANCE BARNSELEY 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 Barnsley, in line with the reporting requirements.

The Commissioner thanked S Poolman for the report, which was easily understood.

The Commissioner highlighted a section in the report which referred to the last quarter having been the most challenging period of the pandemic for policing in Barnsley. S Poolman confirmed that with the arrival of the Covid-19 Kent variant many staff have become infected through contact with the public, with some required to isolate on more than one occasion. Barnsley district has had to make resourcing changes to address this. Many officers have worked longer hours and rest days to ensure the service to the public has been uninterrupted. This improved during February, however, SYP is now seeing a significant increase in demand. Supporting the workforce to ensure they get support and breaks on a busy shift during these unprecedented times is a key focus.

S Poolman confirmed that plans started in February 2021 to ensure adequate resources are in place for the key dates announced by the government in relation to the easing of lockdown. The Commissioner confirmed this was reassuring.

The Commissioner enquired if domestic abuse was expected to rise with the easing of lockdown. S Poolman confirmed that Barnsley had seen a slight increase in reports of domestic abuse over the Christmas and New Year period. February's data shows a significant reduction when compared to January. This would suggest that there is some correlation between the reporting of domestic abuse and lockdown. There is also some seasonal demand with summer months seeing a rise in domestic abuse. This tends to be, in part, due to people drinking more in the warmer weather. Plans are in place each year to address this including revisiting repeat victims and serial domestic abuse perpetrators.

This year there is also European football on the 21 June 2021 which coincides with one of the key lockdown dates announced by government.

The Commissioner highlighted the sustained 55% domestic abuse arrest rate and enquired if this was across all categories. S Poolman confirmed that there are three national domestic abuse categories high, medium and low risk. The initial rating is given by the officer who attends the incident. The Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment team review all cases and may alter the category depending on any additional information. The 55% arrest rate applies to all three categories. S Poolman confirmed that a breakdown of arrest rate by category could be provided in future reports. The Commissioner confirmed he would like to see this.

T Forber confirmed that the domestic abuse categorisation is very broad. He confirmed that the arrest rates are monitored and 55% was what he would expect it to be.

S Poolman highlighted the timeliness of arrests and the danger of losing the support of the victim if too much time has passed before an arrest is made. In January 84% of arrests were being made within four days in Barnsley, this is now 91%. Officers understand why they need to act quickly.

The Commissioner enquired if dealing with domestic abuse is emotionally exhausting for staff. S Poolman confirmed that it was. Domestic abuse makes up over 30% of SYP's demand. S Poolman highlighted the importance of training such as Domestic Abuse Matters to ensure staff did not become complacent.

The Commissioner highlighted Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs) and enquired what happens when a DVPO is breached. S Poolman confirmed that a DVPO is a breach of a court order and anyone who is in breach is taken straight to court.

T Forber highlighted that SYP is in a really strong place in relation to domestic abuse following the investment in domestic abuse teams, training and the use of Claire's Law. Other forces are coming to see the journey SYP has been on.

The Commissioner highlighted the robust process in place for identifying Child Exploitation. He enquired if all districts have a dedicated Child Exploitation officer. S Poolman confirmed that they did. This is a co-ordinating role.

The Commissioner commented on the fall in crime generally and the rise of anti-social behaviour. He highlighted that he was receiving quite a bit of correspondence in relation to fly-tipping.

S Poolman confirmed that if you extract Covid-19 breaches from the anti-social behaviour figures anti-social behaviour is only up by around 3%. However, SYP are starting to see the usual seasonal increase in anti-social behaviour as more young people start to mix.

The Commissioner highlighted the Police Now scheme. This is a national graduate scheme which recruits innovative individuals directly into Neighbourhood Policing Teams with new skills and potential to be future senior leaders. Ahead of the meeting the Commissioner had invited a Police Now graduate to attend the meeting to talk about their experience.

The Commissioner invited Police Now graduate Alice Boucher to say a few words about her experience of the Police Now scheme.

A Boucher joined SYP in July 2020 through the Police Now scheme. She had obtained a psychology degree in York and then went travelling for two years. She had thought about joining the police but she was unsure of the best route or whether she had the right skills. She saw a BBC news article about the Police Now scheme which brought to her attention neighbourhood policing, long term problem solving and engaging with the community. This really appealed to her. She was successful in applying for the scheme and started her training in April 2020. Initially, the training was online training. She then attended Leeds University in person where they undertook role play and put into practice what they had learnt online. She began in September and is based at Attercliffe Police Station.

The Commissioner enquired if you could apply to any force. Yes, any force which is taking part in the scheme. A Boucher confirmed that she is from Sheffield and Sheffield was her first choice.

The Commissioner enquired if she had any regrets. No.

The Commissioner enquired if she was free to apply for other roles within SYP. A Boucher confirmed that once her initial tenure comes to an end she can apply for

other roles. A Boucher confirmed that she was enjoying her role and hoped to stay with SYP.

The Commissioner wished her well for the future and suggested she come back in twelve months' time to see how she is getting on.

T Forber confirmed that SYP are really pleased with the quality of the candidates from the Police Now scheme. There have been two or three intakes and one of the first candidates to apply three years ago is now applying for fast track to Inspector. SYP is keen to maintain links with Police Now alongside SYP's own recruitment programme and the graduate scheme. Police Now have a high number of diverse candidates. Detective Now is also successful.

The Commissioner highlighted the increase in residential burglaries and that Barnsley had been successful in securing funding to enhance ANPR coverage. He enquired if SYP had an ANPR strategy.

S Poolman confirmed that SYP's ANPR team worked closely with Barnsley Metropolitan County Council (BMBC) to make sure all the main routes are covered. Barnsley have now joined forces with Rotherham and Doncaster to submit a bid for the Safer Streets fund for the Dearne Valley.

S Poolman highlighted that SYP also have mobile ANPR vans and some vehicles are also equipped with ANPR to enable a flexible approach.

M Roberts confirmed that there is an ANPR strategy which is based on intelligence.

The Commissioner enquired about the Organised Crime Gangs (OCG) Day of Action. S Poolman confirmed that these take place every month. There are nine OCGs in Barnsley and each Day of Action focusses on one of the OCGs. These days provide dedicated time when resources can come together to address a specific issue.

The Commissioner enquired if children at risk of Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) are targeted. S Poolman confirmed that whilst there is some child exploitation this is not on the same scale as Doncaster and Sheffield. There is a different demographic in Barnsley. Barnsley does use a CCE tracker and provide interventions when appropriate.

The Commissioner thanked S Poolman for the update in relation to speeding and acknowledged the use of social media to update people on what action has taken place.

The Commissioner enquired if Operation Dunlin was going to be reinstated. S Poolman confirmed that the next operation will take place post-harvest. The Commissioner enquired if this was a bit late. S Poolman confirmed that there is a reason why it is taking place then and is in line with the Farmwatch scheme. Intelligence officers work with the local farming community.

The Independent Advisory Group (IAG) was highlighted. S Poolman confirmed that the Barnsley IAG has been in place for a number of years now and had met virtually throughout lockdown. The IAG represents the geography of Barnsley and not just underrepresented groups to obtain a good balance of lived experience.

S Poolman highlighted that Barnsley had tragically lost one of its members last month.

Barnsley district were keen to obtain young people's views but had not been able to retain attendance at the IAG. The Youth IAG was launched in February 2021 and has good representation even without the schools. S Poolman confirmed that it would be interesting to see how this goes.

S Poolman confirmed that it had been a challenging 12 months. She is proud of her officer's commitment, pride and dedication at this difficult time.

**It was agreed that:**

- **A breakdown of domestic abuse arrest rates by category would be provided in future district reports**
- **A Boucher to attend a future PAB to see how she is progressing on the Police Now scheme**

11 FORCE PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN 2017 - 2021 (RENEWED 2019) - TACKLING CRIME AND ASB

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 'Tackling crime and ASB' 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.

The Commissioner thanked T Forber for the report.

The Commissioner highlighted the reference to SYP's workforce being relatively bottom heavy. T Forber confirmed that this referred to the number of new and inexperienced people which does presents challenges. SYP is increasing the size of the force whilst having to manage natural wastage and there will be a large number of inexperienced officers. SYP is bringing officers back on the 30+ scheme and investing in the tutoring and training of new officers to ensure they are equipped as quickly as possible. A new Tutor Unit has been established and there are now a significant number of tutors who are trained. Investment in this area is critical.

T Forber highlighted the importance of the standard of recruits, SYP insist on high standards and the Senior Command Team play an active part in the recruitment process. It is important that new recruits have the right values which fit with the vision of the force.

Data migration was discussed. T Forber confirmed that there is a new data centre which has a backup system in place. The Deputy Chief Constable has a robust approach to ensuring the right level of security is in place. SYP has a number of legacy systems but these are being replaced. A new digital asset management system is being procured. T Forber highlighted that when the migration is undertaken it is important that this is done in an efficient and accurate way with all the information in one place.

The Commissioner highlighted that SYP has successfully collated planning data from the four local authorities in South Yorkshire and this information has been

mapped by the force's Data Intelligence Team to provide a force-wide overview of housing expansion over the long-term, up to 2038. He enquired if the Design Out Crime Officers (DOCOs) are routinely involved. The Chief Constable confirmed that they are. Local authorities have a statutory obligation to have regard to the advice of the DOCOs. SYP does make sure that where applications are granted that secure by design products are included. One new housing estate was approximately 87% less afflicted by crime as a result of this work.

The Commissioner enquired if SYP had all the co-operation it needs. The Chief Constable confirmed that it did, local authorities recognise the benefits.

The Commissioner raised continued professional development (CPD). He enquired if SYP was able to make time for this. T Forber confirmed that SYP has to make time. He highlighted the investment in Neighbourhood Policing training programme and the technical skills course of Sergeants which is being developed. Accredited officers is critical and this training will be followed by CPD.

The Commissioner highlighted the drop in crime and the increase in demand. T Forber confirmed that crime and disorder accounts for 30% of all calls. The rest relates to other issues such as missing children and welfare concerns. As the weather gets better there will be an increase in calls. T Forber highlighted the importance of neighbourhood policing, problem solving and partnership working to address this demand.

The Commissioner highlighted the growing area of fraud and enquired if two fraud prevention officers was enough. T Forber confirmed that SYP had put quite a lot of effort into fraud over the last 18 months, but it's not an area which enforcement activity alone can resolve.

A large amount of fraud is international. SYP have a targeted programme which looks at who is likely to be a victim or repeat victim of fraud and any vulnerable victims will be given prevention advice.

The new Integrated offender Management strategy was highlighted. T Forber highlighted that 10 years ago most of the offending was around serious acquisitive crime now there are different areas of offending.

The Commissioner enquired if the neighbourhood policing teams still managed low risk sex offenders. T Forber confirmed that this is now dealt with by specialist officers.

T Forber highlighted the bitesized training being provided to officers to improve officer's investigative capability. This will shortly be available on mobile devices.

T Forber raised the Armed Crime Team (ACT) which was implemented to tackle the illegal use of firearms across the county. The team has had a number of complex investigations which have successfully led to eleven individuals being charged with serious firearms related offences.

Through co-ordinated work from district proactive teams, the Armed Crime Team, SYP's specialist uniform teams such as Tactical Support Group, and Firearm Support Group, and with additional support from local neighbourhood policing teams, officers across South Yorkshire in total recovered 66 illegally held firearms during 2020.

12 OPCC DELIVERY PLAN 2021/2022

A report of the Chief Executive and Solicitor was presented to the Board. The purpose of the report was to provide an explanation for a proposed departure from the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC's) annual strategic and financial planning process in relation to the PCC's usual approval of delivery plans.

S Abbott informed the Board that the PCC was being asked to approve the proposal that the OPCC and SYP continue their current delivery plans until a new Police and Crime Plan is issued, following the PCC elections on 6 May 2021.

The Commissioner approved the proposal.

The Commissioner informed the Board that all electioneering is currently suspended due to the death of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

13 JIAC EXCEPTION REPORT

S Wragg presented the Joint Independent Audit Committee's (JIAC) exception report. The following points were highlighted:

- The Committee received an update from the PCC and SYP, whilst this is immediately out of date this sets the context for the meeting
- JIAC has taken part in the consultation on the Internal Audit plan for 2021/22
- Assurance had been provided on the contingency planning which had taken place for the UK leaving the European Union
- Risk management arrangements are going to plan
- The Committee received a detailed report on the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and SYP's budget monitoring process
- The approved Treasury Management Strategy 2021/22 was presented to the Committee
- Additional training around Treasury Management is being arranged

The Commissioner thanked S Wragg for the report.

14 IEP EXCEPTION REPORT

A Macskill presented the Independent Ethics Panel (IEP) exception report.

Since the completion of the report a meeting has taken place with the Commissioner. Work has commenced looking at the next stage of SYP's recruitment, in particular from minority communities, in response to the uplift of police officer numbers.

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.

The report was noted.

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

10 June 2021 at 1pm.

CHAIR

