

Monthly Assurance Meeting June 2021– Meeting Notes

Date: Friday 4th June, 14:30 pm
 Chair: John Campion
 Minutes: Natasha Noorbakhsh, Policy Officer, OPCC
 Venue Training Room, Hindlip HQ

	Name:	Capacity:
Attendance:	John Campion	Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
	Natasha Noorbakhsh	Policy Officer (PO)
	Anthony Bangham	Chief Constable (CC)
	Julian Moss	Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)
	Melanie Reynolds	Staff Officer (SO)

No.	Item	
1.	Outstanding Matters / Matters arising N/A	
2.	Holding to account – Performance Questions to be raised at the meeting were circulated in advance. In order to facilitate discussions, the CC shared a written response to these questions with the PCC prior to the meeting.	
2.1	Victim satisfaction Despite an increase in resources and a reduction in offences, burglary satisfaction rates were stable over the last 2 years. The PCC asked whether the CC was satisfied with current performance and whether improvements could be achieved. The CC was not satisfied with the current position. It was reasonable to expect the service provided to victims would improve as demand reduced and resources increased. The CC felt that the force’s aspiration for 80% of burglary victims to be satisfied was achievable. It is clear that in the majority of cases the force is providing a good service, but now incremental gains needed to be made. The DCC observed that part of the challenge was around consistency of service provision, particularly in the context of new student officers. This	

	<p>would be addressed in part by the CPD training days.</p> <p>The PCC had previously been told that the force had a service standard for burglary offences and queried how well embedded it was. The DCC felt that service standards were really important to drive behaviours. However the CC was not confident that officers were aware of or were consistently using it. The PCC asked how the force could embed the standard to drive improvements in the service being offered to victims. The DCC stated that if delivered, the target operating model would provide a framework to embed such processes.</p> <p>It was agreed by all that the variation in satisfaction rates suggested an inconsistent approach to victims across the local policing areas (LPAs). The CC felt that the force needed to get better at identifying and understanding best practice, and become more comfortable focusing attention and providing support to areas that were under-performing.</p> <p>The PCC asked the CC and DCC how frequently members of the LPA command teams engaged with victims of crime. The PCC's contention was that senior officers were more likely to engage with officers who had been victims of crime, compared to victims within the community. The CC and DCC could not estimate how much contact was had but agreed that it was an interesting challenge to the organisation. The DCC will raise this with commanders at the next Force Delivery Group (FDG).</p>	
<p>2.2</p>	<p>Hate crime</p> <p>Volumes of hate crime offences had increased considerably in April. The PCC queried whether the force understood this.</p> <p>The DCC believed that the increases and broader environmental / societal factors impacting hate crime were well understood. The drivers of hate crime are closely monitored locally and nationally. Analysis shared by the CC prior to the meeting sets out the correlation between events that take place in the public eye, and incidents of hate crime. The data at local / national level does not allow you to determine whether increased recording is the result of increased confidence to report to police (which would be welcomed), or due to increases in offending behaviour.</p> <p>The force have implemented a new hate crime model across each of the LPAs. The PCC queried when this would start having a positive impact on hate crime victim satisfaction. As set out in the briefing note, Chief Officers (COs) would expect to see significant improvements driven over the next quarter through to the end of September 2021. This would be overseen by the ACC for LP both through LPA visits and as Chair of the victim satisfaction group. The PCC sought further clarity as to when the hate crime model was rolled out in each LPA. The DCC is going to check implementation dates with the LPA commanders to enable benchmarking activity to take place.</p>	

<p>2.3</p>	<p>Outcomes</p> <p>The PCC had previously been told that the force were implementing a plan to fix the outcome 16 error rate. The PCC queried whether the interventions implemented had achieved what the COs had wanted.</p> <p>The DCC stated that he was not satisfied with the current position. A huge amount of information around outcomes was now available via the monthly / quarterly reports. The force had also approached other ATHENA forces to understand their processes and procedures for outcomes. This had highlighted a number of areas that needed further exploration to determine whether the force was recording outcomes in the right way. The force are also exploring interventions to improve recording accuracy (e.g. using the Crime Bureau) as it was anticipated that this would have a greater impact than wider training.</p> <p>A number of recommendations were made in relation to the outcomes deep dive at FDG in April. The DCC provided assurance that there were mechanisms in place to ensure the recommendations were progressed.</p> <p>The DCC noted that outcomes need to be considered on a case-by-case basis with a focus on achieving the right outcome for each victim. The PCC stated that putting victims and survivors first, and securing positive criminal justice outcomes would be central to his new police and crime plan. The PCC asked how he would get assurance that victims were getting the right outcomes. The DCC felt that this would only be possible through reality testing and would welcome the opportunity to engage with the PCC's office on what this could look like.</p>	
<p>2.4</p>	<p>Child at risk</p> <p>The PCC asked if the force understood the increase in recording of child at risk (CAR) offences over the last 2 months. The CC was satisfied that the reasons for the increase were understood and that the range of child markers were being applied correctly to identify vulnerability and safeguard children and young people (C&YP). There is a lot of activity taking place within the Crime & Vulnerability team which provides reassurance and confidence that the threat, harm and risk is understood.</p> <p>It was suggested that the rise in CAR markers should be seen as a positive indicator. The force's COVID recovery analysis predicted a rise in C&YP needs, and planning sought to match service provision to these needs across all Local Authorities. The COs were clear that despite confidence in the data, there was no room for complacency, as far too many children in our communities remain at risk.</p> <p>The PCC asked whether the work of the PCC-funded exploitation and vulnerability (E&V) trainers may have had an impact on reporting. There is no specific data to determine a correlation but it was possible and the E&V training was seen as an area of success.</p>	

<p>2.5</p>	<p>Operation Navigator</p> <p>Op Navigator set out how local policing will be implemented during the easing of lockdown regulations and how demand will be managed and mitigated wherever possible while providing community reassurance to the public. The PCC asked if Navigator had been successful in changing the course of what could be seen as an inevitable increase in crime following the transition out of lockdown.</p> <p>The CC confirmed that data projections indicated volumes of crime would return to the levels seen pre-lockdown. However Navigator was about looking at how the force could intervene and prevent crime wherever possible. The CC believes the message and ethos of Navigator had been received and understood across the LPAs; particularly in terms of the importance of visibility. The DCC also believed that the plans were being embedded and that over time, would positively impact public confidence.</p> <p>The PCC acknowledged that the force had invested a lot of time setting up Navigator, and asked how the executive would know if it had had an impact. The ACC for Local Policing would be responsible for overseeing this with support from the CC's staff office who were due to undertake robust reality testing over the summer. The DCC is also reviewing data weekly to monitor crime trends locally and nationally as restrictions ease.</p> <p>The PCC asked what the force's role was in terms of prevention. The CC stated that the force understand use of local public spaces, crime and vulnerability hotspots to inform patrols for the purpose of prevention. The DCC observed that as demand increases, the force will have to make tough operational choices to balance proactive resources focused on Navigator activity against increasing day-to-day demands. The force need to be brave around protecting and valuing resources involved in proactive patrols and public assurance. The PCC noted the additional officer numbers in force and the preparedness for utilising these additional resources at times of peak demand.</p>	
<p>2.6</p>	<p>Conduct</p> <p>The PCC noted the increase in conduct cases recorded in 2020/21 and asked for assurance that the drivers behind the increase were understood. The COs are aware of and understand the trends and provided assurance that all matters were appropriately assessed and recorded. However the upward trend locally and nationally was a concern.</p> <p>The PCC referenced a number of cases involving inappropriate use of WhatsApp and social media. The CC stated it was critical to clearly set out expectations of professional behaviour and standards to new student officers by way of the Code of Ethics and the force's vision and values.</p> <p>The CC did note that the younger cohort of officers seemed more confident to challenge and report bad behaviour which was positive.</p>	

	<p>The PCC noted that not all conduct matters involved student officers; there were cases involving supervisors and those with longer service. The DCC confirmed that research showed those with 3-5 years' service were historically most vulnerable to conduct breaches. It was essential to continually reinforce positive behaviours and the Code of Ethics.</p> <p>The PCC wished to put on record that his personal confidence in understanding such matters had increased over the last year. It was his perception that he, and others in the organisation received a very good service from the Professional Standards Department (PSD) and their leadership.</p>	
<p>2.7</p>	<p>Fraud and economic crime</p> <p>Despite being identified as a force priority, fraud and economic crime are not incorporated within the performance management framework (PMF) or reports. The PCC asked for reassurance that COs have sufficient oversight and scrutiny of fraud and economic crime.</p> <p>Fraud and economic crime is reported on widely at a tactical level, and features within the Monthly Force Tasking process. The CC conceded that more needed to be done in terms of CO oversight. This will be a task for the Temporary ACC (Crime and Vulnerability) and the DCC will oversee the development of the gold scorecard to incorporate fraud and economic crime at the strategic level.</p>	
<p>2.8</p>	<p>Performance framework</p> <p>The PCC's new police and crime plan will include a refocus on performance. As such, the force may need to produce different products to reflect the PCC's priorities. This was accepted and will be subject to further discussions as part of the PCC / CO planning day in June.</p> <p>The CC acknowledged that policing doesn't stand still in respect of performance management. Aspirations from central government have been set and are more robust; the force will need to respond accordingly. It is therefore sensible that the force realigns its PMF and products locally to take account of the national priorities and the new police and crime plan. The DCC will lead on bringing this together.</p> <p>The DCC and the force performance team are well sighted on the recently circulated National Crime and Policing Measures. The metrics will be incorporated into the PMF to allow for ease of reporting. The DCC also has a follow up meeting planned with the PCC to understand his aspirations on the future direction for performance management and governance ahead of the planning day. The DCC is keen to co-create a solution with the PCC.</p> <p>The Policing Minister has challenged PCCs around identifying serious violence and ASB hotspots. The PCC had queried whether this type of crime and disorder data had sufficient visibility within existing</p>	

	<p>performance products. The CC set out that moving forward the performance reports needed to evolve to reflect the national policing priorities, as well as the priorities of local communities as set out in the Local Policing Community Charter.</p> <p>The PCC was pleased to note that his office had successfully secured 2 bids in the latest Safer Streets round (1 bid in Telford, 1 bid in North Worcestershire). There had been an opportunity for a third bid for Warndon in Worcester however it was not submitted as it was not as strong, and did not reflect the community voice / engagement with local communities when compared to the other bids. The PCC had provided detailed feedback at the time of receipt.</p> <p>The CC acknowledged that when these bids / projects get delegated to local areas, the results are often vastly different across the piece. However the CC was concerned that this variation in content and / or quality doesn't get identified prior to the proposals being submitted to the PCC or COs. This was something that was identified when reflecting on the Op Navigator plans and was something for the Ch Supt to look at.</p> <p>The DCC felt that he and the Chief Executive needed to take some accountability around this and develop a more joined up approach to enable the force to have greater control and ability to quality assure bids or proposals for commissioning.</p>	
<p>2.9</p>	<p>Violence without injury</p> <p>The PCC queried whether the force understood the profile of violence without injury offences, and had the right operational response. The CC was confident in the force's approach to balancing the needs of the victims with organisational demand management.</p> <p>The briefing note submitted prior to the meeting provided assurance and narrative around the force approach to managing incidents on the ground and use of THRIVE within the OCC. The CC mentioned that use of diary cars was being reviewed and that it was important to ensure use was appropriate.</p> <p>The PCC queried how the force could ensure a common sense approach to making sure the right thing happens more of the time and to managing the expectations of victims. The DCC felt that good and consistent THRIVE analysis was key. If you do this assessment properly then it makes it easier to get the prioritisation right. It is also important to be dynamic in using resources across the entirety of West Mercia, rather than within a single LPA.</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p>AOB</p> <p>Process for briefing the PCC on matters affecting public confidence</p> <p>The PCC wanted to raise the above process as there was a recent</p>	

	<p>example where the PCC had not been notified as he should have been. The PCC asked whether this was indicative of a wider problem.</p> <p>The DCC and CC were aware of this example and noted that they also hadn't been briefed on this case until the CPS decision had been made. Following a debrief, the COs have made it clear that PSD own all matters relating to conduct and criminal investigation of officers and staff. As such is it their responsibility to brief the COs and the PCC.</p> <p>The DCC accepted that COs should be the ultimate backstop, and that it is the role of the duty GOLD to ensure the PCC is briefed if he hasn't been already. The PCC asked for reassurance that the requirements to brief him were understood. The COs confirmed that all were now aware and it would be monitored closely.</p>	
	<p>Confirmation of next meeting type / date / time / venue:</p> <p>Public meeting.</p> <p>Date – TBC.</p>	