

Monthly Assurance Meeting March 2022– Meeting Notes

Date: Friday 11 March, 09:00 am
 Chair: John Campion
 Minutes: Natasha Noorbakhsh, Policy Officer, OPCC
 Venue: West Mercia Police HQ

	Name:	Capacity:
Attendance:	John Campion	Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
	Tracey Onslow	Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC)
	Natasha Noorbakhsh	Policy Officer (PO)
	Alfie Bates	Police and Commissioning Intern (AB)
	Pippa Mills	Chief Constable (CC)
	Julian Moss	Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)
	Rachel Jones	Assistant Chief Constable Local Policing (RJ)
	Richard Cooper	Assistant Chief Constable Crime & Vulnerability (RC)
	Melanie Crowther	Superintendent Crime Management (MC)

No.	Item	
1.	<p>Outstanding Matters / Matters arising</p> <p>Action rising April 2020/21: PCC to revisit progress against the confidence strategy and delivery</p> <p>The Local Policing (LP) Charter is a key mechanism for delivering the confidence strategy. The Charter is well embedded, and there are over 16k sign ups on the force’s community messaging system, Neighbourhood Matters (NM). An annual review of the Charter will be commenced imminently and the CC will consider how to communicate the outcomes achieved to date.</p> <p>The LP Charter requires engagement from local parish councils which can be impacted by the relationship with the Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs). The force are exploring opportunities to help build relationships with Parish Councils and the wider community including those that lack trust in the service.</p> <p>The PCC queried whether service standards varied across local policing areas (LPAs). The CC confirmed that whilst all areas are</p>	

	<p>delivering against the charter, there are local variations. This variation may reflect levels of resource and demand in an area.</p> <p>A new quarterly Confidence Board (chaired by the DCC) has been established to apply more focus to the Confidence Strategy. The Board will identify national and local factors impacting public confidence, and best practice. The OPCC will be consulted on the terms of reference.</p> <p>Quarterly performance data shows some reductions in public confidence, however the force is still showing high levels of success across measures including trust and integrity. AB queried whether the force's aspiration was still to achieve a confidence level of 88%. The CC understands that this aspiration was based on previous good performance, following the exceptional police response to the COVID pandemic. The CC thinks performance of other forces should be reviewed to understand how to make incremental gains. The focus remains on continuous improvement. Discussions are ongoing with the PCC's office about how best to use the confidence data to drive activity.</p>	
2.	Holding to account - Performance	
2.1	<p>Performance framework</p> <p>The PCC welcomed the changes to the quarterly report, which is now better aligned to the Safer West Mercia Plan. The PCC queried how the force utilise the performance framework to drive activity and improve the service to the public.</p> <p>The CC has introduced new monthly performance meetings to ensure focus and grip around key performance issues. This will also enable more frequent support to LPA Commanders to improve the service. Governance around performance management remains under constant review.</p>	
2.2	<p>Victim satisfaction</p> <p>The PCC was disappointed to see that victim satisfaction had decreased across the majority of crime types. The PCC asked whether the existing governance arrangement were fit for purpose.</p> <p>The CC accepted that the existing governance wasn't having the desired impact and the structure has now changed. The force have established a quarterly ACC-led strategic meeting, supported by a monthly tactical meeting chaired by the LP Ch Supt. The meetings will consider the data, ensure focus on the voice of victims and look at 'what works'.</p> <p>The force did not meet any of the aspirations set around satisfaction rates in 2021/22. The PCC asked the CC to set out short, medium and long term deliverables needed to improve victim satisfaction.</p>	

	<p>The CC confirmed that there will be an immediate focus on burglary, acknowledging the impact on victims. The CC’s aspiration is for the force to provide an exceptional service to burglary victims. The CC set out the service standards expected for burglary including attendance at all burglaries, commitment to follow up contact, provision of a burglary dwelling booklet, and further measures for repeat victims. The force have also clarified role specific responsibilities to help drive service improvements.</p> <p>The PCC stated the importance of communicating the service offer to the public. In addition the PCC was keen to explore opportunities to expand existing SmartWater funding to cover neighbouring properties.</p> <p>In the medium and long term, deliverables will include additional CPD training on hate crime; and embedding a new preventative operating model with a focus on victim satisfaction.</p> <p>The PCC highlighted the significant variation in satisfaction rates across the LPAs. The force has undertaken analysis of best practice and identified key tactical options to be delivered across all areas. Delivery of these options will be supported by the local Problem Solving (PS) Hubs. The PCC noted that he directly funded some of the initiatives and resources mentioned. The PCC asked for reassurance around the PS Hub leadership, following a no. of recent staffing changes. The CC confirmed that the new Prevention Supt would have responsibility for the hubs and will drive consistency.</p> <p>Satisfaction is an area that causes the Commissioner great concern and will be bought back for scrutiny in future holding to account meetings.</p>	
<p>2.3</p>	<p>Police conduct</p> <p>There has been a sustained increase in the number of conduct cases recorded in 2021/22 (subject to scrutiny at previous holding to account meetings). The PCC asked the CC to outline how this was being addressed, with a focus on prevention.</p> <p>The CC highlighted the importance of understanding the national context when considering the police response to conduct matters. Issues of discipline recorded as conduct matters do not come from public complaints, but are matters reported internally by the workforce. As such, the trajectory can be seen as positive as the aspiration is to improve confidence of the workforce to report inappropriate behaviour.</p> <p>The DCC was confident that the force was in the right place in terms of the volume of conduct cases and suspensions. Force activity underway includes delivery of the ‘Not in my force, not in my profession’ communications campaign; a prevention focused Professional Standards Department (PSD) action plan; and the force’s wider Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy.</p>	

	<p>The PCC asked whether the message was being delivered consistently across all LPAs given variations in volume of conducts recorded. The force are going to continue to use workforce surveys to understand organisational culture and confidence to challenge. These messages will further be reinforced through the CC's Plan on a Page roadshow.</p> <p>The PCC concluded by acknowledging the good work of PSD in triaging complaints, as identified by the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC).</p>	
<p>2.4</p>	<p>Victims' code</p> <p>As part of the Safer West Mercia Plan, the PCC made a commitment to ensure the force are compliant with the victims' code. The force's ability to evidence compliance is currently limited. In the absence of compliance data, the PCC asked the CC to provide assurance that victims are receiving the service they are entitled to.</p> <p>The CC shares the PCC's frustrations around access to data. In the interim, the force is using dip sampling. The new victims' data analyst (funded by the PCC) will add significant value in developing this area.</p> <p>From the data and dip sampling available, the CC knows that performance needs to improve. A no. of tools to support compliance have been developed including a victim information pamphlet which sets out victims' rights and entitlements.</p>	
<p>2.5</p>	<p>Crime data integrity</p> <p>The PCC outlined findings from the latest ASB audits and noted the impact that non-compliance has on victims. The CC agreed crime data integrity (CDI) is critical to ensure victims get the right service, access and response. Recording crime accurately is largely reliant on the Operational Control Centre (OCC).</p> <p>Action has been taken from both a people and process perspective to identify and remove the errors being made. This includes revised aide memoirs, enhanced training during tutorship, dynamic quality assurance reports; and CPD for SNT and Patrol officers.</p> <p>The Head of Audit, Risk and Compliance (ARC) chairs quarterly tactical CDI meetings attended by local Single Points of Contact (SPOC) who disseminate learning. The force has already started seeing the impact of these meetings through performance data.</p> <p>Regular audits are undertaken to identify risk. The last HMICFRS CDI inspection was 'good' and the CC wants to maintain this to ensure victims aren't being let down. The new ACC for Crime & Vulnerability (RC) will review the force response to the recent audit findings; bringing his experiences from his previous force. There will be a specific focus on ASB which is an emerging issue nationally. The CC</p>	

	<p>also has a wealth of experience from her previous force who have exemplary performance in this area.</p>	
<p>2.6</p>	<p>Outcomes</p> <p>The quarterly report highlighted a significant improvement in positive outcomes in Telford and Wrekin. The PCC queried whether the reasons behind the improvement were understood and how this would be replicated across other LPAs.</p> <p>The CC confirmed that an outstanding, systematic approach had been developed in Telford. This was the result of a comprehensive end-to-end review of processes locally. The review showed that a holistic approach was required involving officers, supervisors, scrutiny and performance management.</p> <p>The approach in Telford & Wrekin has been shared with all LPAs and they are starting to see an uplift in positive outcomes. It was acknowledged that there will be variations on a month-to-month basis, however performance will be continually reviewed. Support will be provided to areas identified as performance outliers.</p>	
<p>2.7</p>	<p>Repeat victims and offenders</p> <p>The PCC queried whether the force had an accurate picture of repeat victimisation and recidivism in West Mercia.</p> <p>Police recorded data needs to be supplemented with data from other sources. The aspiration is to bring together data from partners. Only 1 force nationally has been able to do this. The force is at least 1 year away from having the technical capabilities to improve reporting in this area. However, there would also need to be significant work to engage with partners. As such, the DCC estimated it would take a number of years to achieve aspirations for multi-agency victim and offenders' data. Action: Review progress in force approach to reporting on victims and offenders data in 6 months.</p> <p>The PCC asked how he could work with the force and partners to prevent victimisation. The force's data set focuses on those most at risk, and those causing the most harm. Indecent images has been identified as an area where more could be done to prevent victimisation. Homicide prevention is also a key priority for the force. Domestic abuse (DA) is a key driver of homicide; and action following first report is critical for DA. There may be an opportunity to work with partners and commissioned services to intervene earlier around DA.</p> <p>The force also want to examine their approach to managing perpetrators behind repeat victimisation. The PCC is setting up a new commissioning board and the ACC (RC) will link in to develop the offer. The force also agreed that there may be an opportunity to better define</p>	

	and communicate the service offer around DA to the public. Action: RC and DPCC to meet and discuss options for a service offer for victims of DA. This will take into account and help inform the PCC's commissioned activity in this area.	
2.8	<p>Investigations</p> <p>The PCC asked whether a plan was in place to address the continued increase in open investigations and officers with a large caseload.</p> <p>The CC confirmed that a lot of activity was underway, linked to ongoing efforts to improve outcomes and victim satisfaction. It is important to address the increases for victims as well as the welfare of the workforce. Two force-wide projects (Op Reset and the frontline stabilisation work) are critical to driving improvements in the investigative space.</p> <p>A no. of LPAs were identified as outliers. Shropshire was identified as an outlier for investigations, as well as other key performance indicators (e.g. outcomes, satisfaction). The PCC asked if there were wider conversations ongoing in respect of the operating model within the LPA. The CC stated that Shropshire had seen the biggest reduction in open investigations, albeit from a more critical position. The frontline stabilisation work will enable the Chief Officers to assess levels of resource in the context of the demanding geography in Shropshire. Best practice from other LPAs was also being rolled out.</p>	
2.9	<p>Other sexual offences</p> <p>The PCC asked whether the force understood the increase in other sexual offences (OSO) recorded in 2021/22. The CC was not reassured that the drivers were understood, however the force are not an outlier. Nationally there appears to be an increase in peer-on-peer offences involving children. The force are looking to explore this in more detail by working with a local University.</p> <p>The PCC asked if there were any gaps in commissioned services or any further support his office could provide in response to the increase. There is a perception that there is less support for victims at court and more via the telephone. This may be an opportunity for commissioned services. The Chief Officers will engage via the PCC's new commissioning board.</p>	
2.10	<p>Serious and organised crime (SOC)</p> <p>There was a significant reduction in Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) disruptions in Q3. The PCC asked for reassurance that the downturn was understood and that tackling SOC remained a priority for the force.</p>	

	<p>The CC was clear that SOC is still a priority for the force as set out in the investment in resources in the 22/23 budget.</p> <p>There are several hypotheses around the reduction. The reduction was picked up via Force Delivery Group (FDG), with an action for the ACC (RC) to commission analysis to better understand the drivers. The findings will be reported back to FDG. Action: PCC to be sighted on outcome of analysis.</p>	
2.11	<p>Road traffic collisions (RTCs)</p> <p>The latest performance report shows that vulnerable roads users remain a concern in respect of killed or seriously injured (KSI) casualties. The PCC asked how this performance information is used to effectively inform policing activity and prevent harm.</p> <p>The force has a dedicated analyst to identify trends. Robust structures are in place to use these insights to drive activity (inc. a tactical roads group and a quarterly roads policing performance meeting chaired by the ACC (RJ)). Data is also used for community speed watch initiatives. Through these forums the force is working with other agencies to address the causal factors of RTCs.</p> <p>The Road Safety Team and Corporate Comms team also use internal / external insights to inform awareness raising activities. Recently this included supporting the national campaign to raise awareness of changes to the Highway Code. Local SNTs have also increasingly used social media to promote their road safety activity.</p> <p>The PCC queried whether the force needed more executive leadership to address engineering issues with local authorities. The Chief Officers are empowering the Road Safety Team to escalate issues if they don't get traction with partners. The PCC can also provide support where further influence is required to drive the behaviour of partners.</p>	
3.	<p>AOB</p> <p>N/A.</p>	
4.	<p>Confirmation of next meeting type / date / time / venue:</p> <p>Tuesday 29th April 2022 15:00</p> <p>Thematic – Investigations.</p>	