

Monthly Assurance Meeting May 2022– Meeting Notes

Date: Monday 23rd May, 15:00
Chair: John Campion
Minutes: Alfie Bates, Policy and Commissioning Intern, OPCC
Venue West Mercia Police HQ

Attendance:	Name	Capacity
	John Campion	Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
	Alfie Bates	Policy and Commissioning intern (PCI)
	Jackie Irvin	Senior Policy Manager (SPM)
	Pippa Mills	Chief Constable (CC)
	Julian Moss	Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)
	Rachel Hartland Lane	Director of Business Services (DBS)
	Richard Cooper	Assistant Chief Constable (ACCCV)
	Rachel Jones	Assistant Chief Constable (ACCLP)
	Richard Muirhead	Director of Commercial Services (DCS)

PCC opening comment		Force response
<p>The PCC raised his concern that the updates on the briefing document are out of date (the majority of the updates provided are from March/April) and will not reflect the current position against each AFI in the report. The PCC was concerned and noted it was a missed opportunity by the force and the delay in reporting will make it difficult to update the PCP on the progress against the AFI's. The PCC asked whether the CC is satisfied with the reporting lag.</p>		<p>The CC commented that the actions set out in the document reflected existing work, which was not solely being done in response to the report findings. The CC added that the tracker is updated bi-monthly for the Service Improvement Board (SIB) which provides governance and oversight. The timescale for updates is appropriate given the changes required are not overnight fixes.</p> <p>The DCC commented that updates to the AFIs will be made at SIB on (25/05).</p>
Areas for improvement (AFI)		
AFI / recommendation	PCC's assurance questions	Force response
<p>AFI 1: The force should reinvigorate its work with independent advisory groups (IAGs) in all parts of the force. It should work with IAGs to ensure consistent and comprehensive data sharing, the review of body-worn video (BWV), and meaningful scrutiny of the use of force, with actions taken in light of the IAGs' feedback</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The PCC asked the CC how she is assured that the LPA scrutiny panels are being developed in a consistent manner and will provide robust oversight. 2. The PCC highlighted that HMICFRS had commented that there was a lack of evidence in how the force sought or used feedback from IAGs. The PCC asked how the CC will ensure feedback from IAGs is used to inform activity, decision making and learning. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ACCLP replied that covid had led to some disruption in LPA scrutiny panels and the scrutiny of body worn video (BWV) varied across LPA. However post covid there has been improvement and greater consistency in work being done by the scrutiny panels. Learning from the panels is collated centrally and fed back into CDP sessions. 2. The CC responded that feedback from IAGs is discussed at use of force and stop and search working groups, chaired by Chief Supts. IAGs also attend these. These meetings report to an Operational Inclusion Board, chaired by the ACCLP, which in turn reports to a Inclusion and Strategy Board meeting which is chaired by the CC.
<p>AFI 2: The force should be regularly monitoring a comprehensive set of data on its use of stop and search, in line with our 2017 national legitimacy recommendation, to enhance its understanding of fair and effective use of these powers. This data should be scrutinised by the force and used to ensure that the use of stop and search</p>	<p>The PCC noted that the update provided by the force in response to AFI 2 focuses on process changes and learning, rather challenging the disproportionality reported. The PCC asked the CC that given the force has the highest rates of disproportionality nationally, is she confident the officers are using their powers fairly and proportionality?</p>	<p>The CC responded that the stop and search strategy is being re written, this coincides with new training for officers around stop and search. The CC added that the publication of data from the latest census will assist in providing a greater understanding of the areas demographics.</p> <p>ACCLP added that as the number of black people stopped is very low, and due to the low number stopped each stop can be examined in detail to allow for any potential issues to be raised. This information is then fed into the working groups to ensure continued and effective scrutiny.</p>

<p>powers is proportionate and targeted appropriately.</p>		
<p>AFI 3: The force should work with health partners to introduce effective arrangements to promptly support people in mental health crisis.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The PCC noted reference to the ongoing project by West Mids Ambulance Service to have 4 MH Transport hubs within West Mercia. As this is unlikely to be delivered until 23/24 the PCC asked for assurance from the CC that there are plans in place to support people with mental health issues that come into contact with the force. 2. The PCC noted that in the force update it details a mapping exercise to be undertaken by mid-May to ensure plans for a 'vulnerability desk' fit with the existing delivery model. The PCC asked the CC to provide an update as it is past mid-May. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ACCCV response was that the force primary response in the Intervening period is making sure those who contact the OCC are directed to the right agency. The OCC will also have updated training to ensure they deploy officers when needed. ACCCV opinion is that better training to OCC staff will help cover the gap till 23/24. The CC confirmed the mapping exercise is not complete. The DCC added that the force has no concrete timetable for this mapping exercise to be complete but are working on it. <i>The PCC believed this should have been included in the updates provided.</i> 2. The DBS confirmed it needs to be incorporated into the wider transformation programme to establish a timeline for delivery. Action arising: DBS to provide the PCC with the timeline for delivery of the vulnerability desk once developed
<p>AFI 4: The force should make sure that call takers give appropriate advice on the preservation of evidence and crime prevention?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The PCC noted that the CO's aspiration to this AFI are unclear from the update provided. The PCC asked the CC to set out the level of service that should be provided by the OCC in respect of preservation of evidence and crime prevention. 2. In response to the CC's reply to Q1, the PCC asked if there was a standard set by the collage of policing and how the force will deliver against this AFI? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The CC replied that advice is given for specific crime types, accessed by call handlers from a drop down menu to provide immediate advice, the advice is relatively limited. PNC training for OCC staff will help support progress. 2. The CC confirmed there is no standard set by the College of Policing APP. The force will map the progress against this AFI by dip-sampling and encouraging call handlers to use the prompt menus the CC noted that these prompt menus are not used sometimes by call handlers.

<p>AFI 5: The force should make sure that repeat callers, and those that are vulnerable, are routinely identified.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The PCC notes that the force update sets out that COVID disruption impacted required training for call handlers to make full and informed assessments. The PCC asked the CC if she is confident that training planned for Q2 22/23 will ensure that vulnerable callers are identified at the earliest opportunity? 2. In response to the CC's reply the PCC asked if the CC could commit to the training being complete by the end of quarter 3. 3. The PCC asked the CC how the force will measure the impact of the training to determine if it has achieved the anticipated benefits. 4. The PCC asked the CC whether there was the right culture in the OCC and sought assurance from the CC that call handlers understand the impact correctly applying flags has on the service provided to vulnerable members of the public? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The CC sets out that because the PNC training was delayed due to covid it has resulted in a backlog of OCC call handlers receiving this training programme. Due to the call handlers not being able to take calls whilst training it has had a negative impact on 101 performance. The backlog in training will take time to clear. 2. The ACCLP said that this timeline cannot be guaranteed as training can be disrupted, as keeping the OCC running is the priority. 3. The CC said that this will be achieved by seeing an increase in the use of the vulnerability marker, dip sampling calls, audit and assurance and general day to day supervision. The CC commented that this has already seen some benefits with repeat callers 4. The CC response was that the new plan on a page is getting buy in from staff, and helping them to understand their individual role and purpose. The OCC staff will have the opportunity to attend one of these sessions.
<p>AFI 6: The force should accurately record all missing person reports on the force missing person system.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The PCC noted that against this AFI there was no tactical or strategic lead. The PCC asked the CC whether she is assured that this AFI has an identified owner to drive necessary activity 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The CC stated that the SIB (25/05) will provide an update on the Tactical and Strategic lead. The DCC added the strategic lead previously identified had changed roles

	<p>2. The PCC highlights that the steps to green process sets out that LPA SPOCs will be utilised to monitor missing person reports but this isn't covered in the update. The PCC asked the CC whether she is satisfied that current arrangements allow for local leadership of incidents involving missing person?</p>	<p>2. The ACCCV said that although he could not provide definitive assurance before he has attend SIB (25/5), he could see no reason why this wouldn't be the case.</p>
<p>Cause of concern: The force needs to improve how it investigates crimes, supervises investigations and updates victims</p>		
<p>Recommendation 1: West Mercia Police should, within three months: make sure investigation plans are created where applicable, with supervisory oversight ensuring that all investigative opportunities are taken</p>	<p>1. The PCC asked the CC whether she is satisfied that one CPD session will have the anticipated impact on investigations plans to provide victims with a quality service</p> <p>2. The PCC notes that the recommendation includes improving supervisory oversight but this isn't included in the 'steps to green' or the update on activity. The PCC asked the CC whether she was confident that remedial action identified will address the concerns around investigative supervision.</p> <p>3. The PCC raised his concern that the activity outlined by the CC in her verbal update is not represented in the update very well.</p>	<p>1. The CC is confident that a half-day session for all front line officers will be enough to cover all areas – The CC said that this is just the beginning and a constant assessment will continue to happen. The CC stated that the Sgt development programme is incorporating learning from Op Reset in order to improve the service delivered by the force.</p> <p>2. The CC believed that action being taken is enough. – The CC highlighted that an executive update on Op Reset is due soon (6th June).</p> <p>Action Arising: PCC to be given a copy of the slide pack and a briefing on Op Reset before 6th June.</p> <p>3. The CC stated that more information will be provided in the coming days.</p>

<p>Recommendation 2: West Mercia Police should, within three months: make sure victims are regularly updated in line with the Victims' Code and that victim needs assessments and victim personal statements are recorded when appropriate, so victims are provided with suitable support service throughout the investigation</p>	<p>The PCC asked whether the CC is satisfied that the progress to date to address the 2 recommendations will enable the force to comply with the 3 months deadline for compliance</p>	<p>The CC said that she is happy with the current progress being made in support of the 2 recommendations and anticipates that the force will achieve this within 3 months. The ACCLP added that Victims Board is in place chaired by her, which, providing oversight of VCOP compliance. Work being done to simplify processes for officers to follow and a take away is one action arising from this Board.</p>
<p>Areas for improvement (AFI)</p>		
<p>AFI 7: The force should improve how it records victim decisions and their reasons for withdrawing support for investigations; and make sure it documents whether evidence led prosecutions have been considered in all such cases.</p>	<p>The PCC highlights that the update provided by the Force focuses on why victims of DA withdraw support but the AFI relates to all victims. The PCC asked the CC whether she can clarify if there are plans in place for the force to improve understanding of why victims withdraw support across all crime types</p>	<p>The CC replied that the update is on DA and there are clear steps to green related to this AFI. The CC stated that she saw the investigation plan template as key to address the issues raised in this AFI and that reality testing taking place later in the year will test the use and consistency of investigation plans This testing will support allow the force to improve its understanding of why victims withdraw support across all crime types. The CC stated that the weekly DCI reviews are acting as a gatekeeper for the use of outcome 16. Outcome 16 has seen an increase in use this month and will be reviewed at the next Force Delivery Group.</p>
<p>AFI 8: The force should make sure that all victims are consulted prior to and following the use of a caution, with all such victim contact appropriately recorded.</p>	<p>The PCC asked the CC whether she was assured that reliance on Op reset to deliver activity within this area will improve the service victims receive?</p>	<p>The CC replied that she was absolutely assured that OP reset will deliver the required activity. The CC further stated that cultural shift and the changes to systems and processes will contribute to change and improve the service delivered by the force.</p>
<p>AFI 9: The force should agree a multi-agency data collection plan to enrich the strategic understanding of vulnerability by the force and its partners.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The PCC was concerned that this AFI had no update. The PCC asked the CC if she is reassured that action is being taken to the issue flagged by the inspectorate? 2. The PCC followed up and asked how the CC can be reassured this AFI will be 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The CC replied that this AFI will require work with external partners to deliver. The CC stated that the outcome may take longer as a result of this outside working. The CC added that a review of what is currently shared with external partners has been completed.

	<p>addressed in the midst of all other AFI highlighted</p> <p>3. The SPM questioned the lack of information sharing agreement across the force</p>	<p>2. The DCC responded that the use of partnership boards would be key. He also suggested the possibility of linking in with the OPCC to commission services.</p> <p>3 The DCC stated that these are in need of refreshing but do not pose a barrier</p>
<p>AFI 10: The force should make sure that orders such as domestic violence protection notices and orders are considered in all appropriate cases.</p>	<p>1. The update given by the force sets out that DVPNs are often abandoned in favour of alternative outcomes during the investigation. The PCC asked whether the CC is assured that this will feed into Op Reset and improve the requirements around supervision and reviews.</p>	<p>1. The CC said that the force are looking to use different levels of DVPNs E.G conditional bail. The CC notes that these will be difficult to evidence but the key thing will be to record the rationale used. The CC added that that continued supervision and oversight will be needed to maintain the approach.</p>
<p>AFI 11: The force should make sure that it has the capacity and capability to proactively identify breaches of orders and further offences, and that all breaches and offences are fully recorded on force systems.</p>	<p>No question, but the PCC commented on the positive impact of the DFU investment</p>	<p><i>CC acknowledged the positive comment by the PCC</i></p>
<p>AFI 12: The force should ensure that its learning and development provision fully meets its workforce development needs.</p>	<p>The PCC asked the CC whether she had anything else to add for the AFIs 12, 13, 14 & 16 that wasn't covered in the Workforce HTA?</p>	<p>The CC stated that the majority of information was provided at Workforce HTA and thus no updates for the following AFIs which differ from those provided at Workforce HTA.</p> <p>The DBS replied that there had been a strategic assessment of workforce skills. The assessment into patrol had been completed and the investigation assessment is scheduled to be completed by the end of June. The DBS noted that the strategic assessment had identified a disparity in skill sets across shifts.</p> <p>In addition the DBS stated that there was recognition the LEAD programme needed to become clearer about the pathways officers and staff can take to enhance training.</p>

		The DBS stated that D&I will help to deliver this AFI and states the good work being undertaken already. The DBS highlights the current information on the intranet and web pages. The DBS acknowledges that more work is needed to be done around comms to ensure more people become aware.
AFI 13: West Mercia's 2019 report said that the force should improve how it manages individual performance and identifies talent, ensuring reviews are consistently and fairly applied across the workforce and valued by all, and that poor performance is managed consistently. This remains an area for improvement.	Addressed as part of the workforce HTA	
AFI 14: West Mercia's 2019 report said that the force should ensure that it provides suitable training, support and capacity for its supervisors so that they are fully equipped and confident to manage the performance and development of their staff, including effectively managing poor performance and identifying talent. This remains an area for improvement.	Addressed as part of the workforce HTA	
AFI 15: The force should improve the breadth and accuracy of data and make	The PCC was concerned that no update had been provided against this AFI. The PCC asked	The CC stated that this is a significant piece of work and that she is satisfied and reassured that action is being taken to address this AFI. The CC also stated that

<p>sure there is improved consistency in working practices.</p>	<p>the CC how she can be reassured that action is being taken to the issue flagged by the inspectorate?</p>	<p>a business case for the D&I light project around data integration has been approved.</p> <p>The DCS added that a management and information development team is being created to help with this AFI. This work is being bought into Op Reset and will contribute to the delivery of this AFI.</p> <p>More updates on this AFI will be provided at SIB (25/05).</p>
<p>AFI 16: West Mercia's 2019 report said that the force should expand its skills project work to include an assessment of all skills, not only operational, including potential future skills requirements. This assessment should inform workforce plans. This remains an area for improvement.</p>	<p>Addressed as part of the workforce HTA</p>	
<p>AOB:</p>		
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The PCC asked the CC whether she had any areas she would like to address or raise. 2. The SPM asked the CC whether anything in the initial commentary at the start of the report needs to be addressed <p><i>The PCC highlighted that updates should have been timelier in the report.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The CC highlighted that in the last PCP there was concern from some panel members around the extra investment in investigations in the budget. The CC notes that the PEEL report and force response to the AFIs show this investment to be the right decision. 2. The CC notes that the initial commentary at the start of the HMICFRS report feeds into the AFIs and thus the CC noted she has nothing else to add.