

Monthly Assurance Meeting August 2022– Meeting Notes

Date: Thursday 25th August, 10:00am
 Chair: John Campion
 Minutes: Charity Pearce, Assistant Policy Officer, OPCC
 Venue: West Mercia Police HQ

	Name:	Capacity:
Attendance:	John Campion	Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
	Jackie Irvin	Policy Officer (NN)
	Charity Pearce	Assistant Policy Officer (CP)
	Thom Dancox	OPCC Intern (TD)
	Pippa Mills	Chief Constable (CC)
	Julian Moss	Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)
	Richard Cooper	Assistant Chief Constable (ACC)

No.	Item	
1.	<p>Outstanding Matters / Matters arising</p> <p>In the October 21/22 holding to account meeting, issues relating to Victim Right of Review (VRR) were raised and commitments were made by the force. An action arose to revisit in 6 months' time to determine if changes had been made.</p> <p>A briefing note was provided before the meeting setting out the forces current position.</p> <p>The CC added that there had been clear progress with a number of CPD sessions planned for officers with a focus on the victims code. The briefing note shows the oversight and grip in place.</p> <p>The PCC asked what the outcome for the public was. The CC responded that victim satisfaction is not where they want it to be but it would be the main indicator that CPD training is having an impact.</p> <p>Jl asked if dip sampling processes were in place to scrutinise whether the VRR had been offered to victims. The ACC said that this should fall under part of wider scrutiny activity but that it may be worth considering whether there is more bespoke work to consider to ensure it is in place.</p>	

2.	<p>Holding to account – Serious Violence</p> <p>The CC provided the PCC with a briefing document on Serious Violence prior to the meeting and this formed the basis of the questions asked at the meeting.</p> <p>The PCC asked the CC for her assessment of the briefing document. The CC said that she was happy, the report was succinct with the executive voice shown throughout. The PCC agreed that this was a better quality product.</p> <p><u>Executive Summary</u></p> <p>The PCC asked if the CC could provide an indication of when the alternative approach to the prevention network would be progressed. The CC responded that the initial meeting was unable to take place due to the recent IT outage but she would expect to know initial plans in 2-3 weeks.</p> <p>The PCC asked if the uplift into the investigative resource had been fully realised in MIU. The CC answered that the internal uplift has been planned carefully but the aim is to have all roles filled by December. Only by exception would posts be filled in Q4.</p>	
2.1	<p><u>Homicide</u></p> <p>The force developed a homicide action plan at the beginning of the year with a number of actions. The PCC asked whether the recently introduced mental health markers have been embedded across the force and are having the desired impact. ACC Cooper responded that mental health is a small factor in offending so doesn't think it will have a large impact on reducing homicides.</p> <p>The PCC acknowledged that there are 40 actions within the plan with a number having already been completed, he asked if the CC was reassured that activity to date has had the desired impact on the forces approach to addressing homicide. The CC and ACC said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plan has given focus since it was formulated but NPCC are developing a framework which will allow the force to adjust the local plan to align with it. - A number of contributing factors as shown in plan but are dispersed into other individual plans i.e drugs. - Truly comprehensive plan would include all activity and individual plans. <p>The PCC added that it is harder to target wider societal issues driving homicide but he was not convinced that element was as broad as it</p>	

	<p>should be and sought clarity about how the intervention would happen. The CC said that focussing on wider prevention such as DA, VAWG and drugs has more impact.</p> <p>The PCC highlighted that there are a number of outstanding analytical related actions on the delivery plan. He asked the CC if she was confident that the force truly understand drivers of homicide to target police activity. The CC said that any performance gaps have been highlighted for future development but not everything can be done at once.</p> <p>The PCC also added that a number of actions relate to partnership working which is yet to progress, sought clarification around the reasons why and offered his assistance in resolving any issues. The CC recognised that this is the hardest thing to get going but said that assistance in the processes to ensure implementation of the SV duty would be helpful. The DCC added that it would be useful to understand what is going to be done regarding the prevention network.</p> <p>ACC cooper added that a significant piece of work not referenced in the delivery plan was the VAWG problem profile that is relevant to ongoing activity. JI clarified whether this profile would be shared more widely.</p> <p>ACTION: ACC Cooper to share VAWG problem profile.</p>	
2.2	<p><u>Engagement/Outcomes- Homicide Prevention Meeting</u></p> <p>West Mercia were initially invited to the Home Office homicide roundtable due to being an outlier. The PCC asked whether this engagement was still ongoing. The DCC confirmed that West Mercia are not currently involved in those meetings or subject to ministerial attention.</p> <p>The PCC asked how the force were engaging with neighbouring forces to target county lines gangs and what the impact of this was. The CC said that recent operational results were supported by the use of various tactics, the force are engaged in regular meetings with other forces regionally.</p> <p>The PCC acknowledged that West Midlands and Merseyside receive a Home Office grant to tackle county lines and asked if we are sighted on the performance monitoring around the grant funding. The CC confirmed that they don't.</p> <p>ACTION: PCC to raise with HO/APCC in how we understand the benefit of the grant they receive.</p>	
2.3	<p><u>Recorded Homicide Levels</u></p>	

	<p>The PCC asked if the CC was reassured that data issues previously raised in January HTA have been rectified and the figures quoted in this briefing report are accurate. The DCC responded that yes, they are confident the force is recording in line with the rules.</p> <p>The briefing note highlighted that a number of homicides are recorded as homicide due to crime recording rules but wouldn't traditionally be classed as a homicide. The PCC asked how the force are reassuring members of the public around incidents that are not technically homicide but have attracted media coverage. The CC said that it is not for the force to comment once the investigation has started but they are satisfied with the community reassurance that takes place immediately after an incident.</p> <p>The PCC acknowledged that upcoming changes to the Home Office Counting Rules will change how unexplained deaths are recorded. He sought clarification that 15 homicides under the new rules would no longer be recorded as such. ACC Cooper responded that current crime recording rules have unique difficulties, new rules will allow a holding position of unexplained death to be recorded whilst the investigation continues.</p>	
2.4	<p><u>Performance</u></p> <p><u>Overview of force performance based on agreed definition of Serious Violence</u></p> <p>The PCC asked if the CC was satisfied that the force understands the drivers behind the increasing numbers of young people admitted to hospital with sharps injury. The CC said yes, it has returned to pre-Covid levels but is being closely monitored. JI asked if it is expected to continue on an upward trajectory. The DCC responded that based on demographics, changes are hard to predict but evidence based on prevention approaches are shown to make a difference.</p> <p>The PCC added that overall admissions are very low but he wants to understand wider partnership work and how his grant funded projects are utilised. The DCC said that targeted interventions for knife crime have more impact. The CC added that they don't have sight of PCC grant funded performance data and asked if it could be shared with the force.</p> <p>ACTION: PCC to share relevant commissioning data with CC.</p> <p>The PCC sought reassurance that due to the low numbers the force would understand all those that had a criminal element. The CC confirmed that they don't, health system data is not easily accessible.</p> <p>The number of firearms discharged are low in West Mercia. The PCC</p>	

	asked given this were the force sighted on the reasons behind its usage. The CC said that West Mercia are one of the highest force areas for licensed firearms holder, given the number of discharges are so low they would understand when and why they happen.	
2.5	<p><u><i>Local Definition of Serious Violence</i></u></p> <p>The PCC asked why performance for all crime types referenced within the local serious violence definition was not address in the briefing note. The DCC responded that they are all addressed in existing performance products available.</p> <p>Of performance data included in the report, it demonstrated personal robbery offences over the last 4 years. The PCC asked if there were any key drivers behind the upward trend seen more recently. The CC said that it is analysed weekly through governance processes. Recorded levels have increased to pre Covid levels. It is expected that acquisitive crime will increase due to financial climate.</p> <p>The PCC highlighted the current financial pressures experienced within society and sought reassurance that the impact on offending behaviour is understood with plans in place to prevent it. The CC said she gets assurance on a weekly basis but there is a multi-pronged approach to dealing with it. This would fit in with force wide strategic assessment.</p>	
2.6	<p><u><i>Accessibility and oversight of data and analytical products</i></u></p> <p>The PCC asked if the policing leads have sufficient performance information in a cohesive joined up format to drive policing activity. The CC responded that the monthly performance meeting allows for closer oversight to feed into strategic meeting.</p> <p>The PCC asked if they were reassured that the self-service tools were being consistently used across the force. The ACC was reassured that policing area command teams use the tools. The DCC added that as a force they make best use of the data they have but moving forwards they need to develop a data strategy and invest in the use of data.</p> <p>An action outstanding from the July meeting was for the CC to share the digital strategy. She added that it is still not at a place where it can be shared.</p> <p><i>Current and planned analytical products</i></p> <p>The PCC asked in the planned analytical products will provide the necessary insight and understanding to all of the serious violence offences to target resources and activity. The CC responded that anything identified as an outlier will be reviewed by exception.</p> <p>PCC sought reassurance that performance products are shared with</p>	

	<p>partners in a timely manner. The CC was reassured that where information sharing agreements are in place they are. The PCC gave an example of where products haven't been shared.</p> <p>ACTION- DCC to review and ensure information sharing is taking place.</p>	
2.7	<p><u>Serious Violence Duty</u></p> <p><u>Strategic Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>The PCC welcomed the joint working on the needs assessment but recognised that there were some further additional needs.</p> <p>As part of the Serious Violence Duty, specified authorities are required to share data and develop a strategic needs assessment together. The PCC sought reassurance that the force is effectively engaging with partners to fulfil the requirement. The CC and DCC responded that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - there is a clear timeline for next steps and CSPs are well represented across the force. - They welcomed the letter sent by the PCC to CSPs around the SV duty. - The force can influence but can't control partners and they are taking too much ownership in developing performance products. <p>The PCC asked if the CC was reassured that the force was taking a leadership role with partners to ensure requirements of the duty were completed in time across all policing areas in a consistent way. The CC highlighted meetings attended by both CC and PCC with CEO's of local authorities showing force ownership and leadership in engaging with partners.</p> <p>The PCC asked what the next steps are. The CC said that a needs assessment was planned to build towards a prevention network. The DCC added that a high level multi agency data collection plan needs to be developed.</p> <p>The PCC acknowledged that when reviewed overall, there was lots of partnership related activity set out in the briefing note and asked what was needed from the PCC. The CC said she welcomed the letter sent to CSP's confirming SV duty arrangements and sought clarity for where the original action came from.</p> <p>ACTION: PCC to confirm which governance board action arising came from.</p>	
3.	<p>AOB</p> <p>N/A.</p>	

4.	Confirmation of next meeting type / date / time / venue: Tuesday 4 th October Thematic – Diversity and Inclusion	
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