

---

**NORTHUMBRIA PCC MINUTES**

---

**Title**

Business Meeting

**Date**

15 August 2023

**Location**

Teams/MEL

**Duration**

9am-10am

---

**Present:**

Kim McGuinness – Police and Crime Commissioner  
Vanessa Jardine – Chief Constable (CC)  
Ruth Durham – Chief of Staff of the OPCC  
Adrian Pearson – Director of Planning and Delivery (OPCC)  
Tanya Reade – Corporate Governance Manager (NP)  
Kevin Laing – Chief Finance Officer (CFO)  
Scott Young – ACC - Force Coordination (NP)  
Paul Godden – Head of Corporate Development (NP)  
Steven Hume – Director of Violence Reduction Unit (OPCC)  
Laura Repton – Public Affairs and Governance Officer (OPCC)  
Vicki Wilson – Minute Taker (OPCC)

**Apologies:** Debbie Ford – Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)

---

**OPEN SESSION**

**1. Minutes of the open session of Business Meeting held on 8 June 2023**

The minutes were agreed as a true record.

**2. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising that had not been included in the agenda.

**3. Violence Reduction Unit**

The Director for the VRU highlighted the main points from the report.

Homicide rates remained static when comparing the data from 21/22 to 22/23. This was a positive step and it was hoped a decline in homicides would be seen when analysing next year's data.

The Home Office had taken an interest in the work being carried out by Northumbria with regards to the 'near miss' initiative and relevant liaisons would take place in the coming months.



Hospital admissions for assault with a sharp object had seen a reduction of 2% during the first three quarters of financial year 2022-23 (April-December). The CC queried the discrepancy between the national data reducing by 25-29% and Northumbria's reduction of only 2%. The Director of the VRU advised that their target audience remained mostly for over 25s, and it was likely that other force areas had higher numbers they dealt with, and therefore a different baseline to start from. It was felt that this would improve once the A&E Navigators were in place and the impact would be seen in the data next year.

The Education Team had received excellent feedback for their work, however there would be further change with regards to working with more targeted and smaller groups where needs had been identified. Work with schools would continue to be effective with more confidence building and better online resources to be made available.

The Serious Violence Legal Duty was on track with all relevant timescales and the Strategic Violence Reduction Board was proving to be extremely effective in joint working. The CC advised that it was planned to improve training and knowledge of violence within the force to ensure more specialist officers would be available when needed.

The DIVERT Programme had been adapted to work alongside the Turnaround Programme and numbers had been coming through for all Local Authority areas but these were significantly lower than anticipated in some of areas of the region. The VRU were now working to develop their understanding considering the further amendments that had been made to the Turnaround programme, to identify how best to progress and maintain clarity of their approach and target cohort.

#### **4. National Issues Impacting on Policing**

The CC had recently met with the PCC to discuss various issues. However, the CC did note that the NPCC had recently increased their requests for data sets.

The PCC expressed concern over the police data breach in Northern Ireland and asked for full assurance this could not happen in Northumbria. The CC advised that refresher training regarding FOI requests and how they should be handled would be priority.

The CFO advised of the 7% pay increase from September 2023 and confirmed this would cover both officers and staff.

#### **5. Capital Monitoring Q1**

The Capital Programme budget for 23/24 was £26.446m. As it stood, the spend so far had amounted to £2.885m. A table highlighting exact costs had been outlined.

All prudential indicators were within the approved limits.

The PCC was asked to note the Capital Monitoring for Q1 as of 30 June 2023.

The PCC approved the Key Decision.

## **6. Capital Outturn 22/23**

The CFO highlighted the main points from the reports in Items 5, 6, 7 and 8.

The Capital Spend budget for 22/23 was £39.387m, however the actual spend had only been £16.274m. The main reasons for this were projects being unable to be delivered due to supply issues. Due to this, it was recommended in a Key Decision that the funds were placed into the 23/24 Capital Programme and re-profiled. A table outlining exact costs had been highlighted.

It was noted that all prudential indicators were within the approved limits.

The PCC and CC expressed concern over the large underspend, and felt a more specified plan for refurbishments needed to be drawn up to ensure more effective spending.

The PCC approved the Key Decision.

## **7. Group Revenue Monitoring Q1**

The Group Revenue Outturn as at 30 June 2023 (Q1) had been outlined with associated costs.

The PCC was asked to note the Group forecast outturn of £351.957m which was based on payments processed to date and current projections, against a 2023/24 budget of £355.584m which reflected an in-year underspend position of £3.627m.

The PCC approved the Key Decision.

## **8. Group Revenue Final Outturn**

The Group Revenue Outturn 22/23, subject to audit, had been highlighted with associated costs.

The total movement in revenue reserves for the 2022/23 financial year had been set out and outlined in a table with all relevant costs and explanations.

The PCC was asked to note the Revenue Outturn position as at 31 March 2023, and approve the final transfers to/from Reserves for the 22/23 financial year.

The PCC approved the Key Decision.

## **9. HMICFRS Publication: PEEL Spotlight Report – Police Performance; getting a grip**

The Head of Corporate Development highlighted the main points from the report.



The report was in two parts: Part One examined national themes from PEEL 2021/22 and Part Two explored a problem with strategic performance management.

There had been six recommendations made; three for the NPCC and three for police forces.

With regards to the force recommendations. These were as follows:

*By January 2024, forces should review whether they have effective processes in place to reduce the risk of skilled personnel leaving the organisation. These should include:*  
*-how they conduct exit interviews and use this information to identify patterns and trends in why people leave; and*  
*-how they identify people who are thinking of leaving and the action they take, where appropriate, to encourage them to stay.*  
*Processes should cover police officers, police staff, special constables and volunteers.*

Currently exit surveys were sent to all staff, officers and volunteers. Areas with higher turnover rates had follow-up interviews, with the intention to understand more clearly the reasons for leaving and to explore what further could be done to retain them. This had been further developed through the engagement and retention framework.

*By January 2024, forces should review their proactive well-being support for officers and staff in high-stress roles and situations. They should make sure it includes targeted support that goes beyond mandatory annual psychological screening.*

The Force took a preventative and evidence-based approach to promoting good mental health and wellbeing. The approach included culture change through leadership and management, proactive education, early intervention & screening, and support and rehabilitation. The annual wellbeing survey assessed stress and resilience levels to understand high risk teams/roles and provide department led support. The research was shared at a departmental level to develop bespoke wellbeing plans.

*By January 2024, chief constables should review their force's performance frameworks and governance processes to reassure themselves that the force is:*  
*-collecting and analysing the right data to help it to understand and improve its performance; and*  
*-integrating a culture of evaluation into performance and improvement activity at all levels.*

The Force began development of a new performance management structure in September 2021. A new team was formed to develop local Performance Management Frameworks (PMFs) for all business areas. To date, PMFs had been introduced for the following functions: Contact Handlers, Resource Controllers, Quality and Standards Delivery Team, Telephone Investigation Unit, Risk Management Desk, Response Policing Teams, CID, Neighbourhood Policing Teams, Child Abuse Protection, Rape Investigation



Teams, and Operations (Marine, Mounted, Motor Patrols, Metro Unit, Dogs Section, Firearms and Airport).

**10. HMICFRS Publication: An inspection of how effective police forces are in the deployment of firearms**

The ACC for Force Coordination highlighted the main points from the report.

HMICFRS visited nine police forces in England and Wales between November 2022 and January 2023, including metropolitan and rural forces. Northumbria Police was one of the forces visited. The inspection examined how effective police forces were in the deployment of firearms, including specialist munitions, and sought to establish whether the public could be confident that police policies, structures and processes complied with relevant guidance and legislation.

Overall HMICFRS found officers involved in armed policing were dedicated, professional and focused on keeping the public safe. At an operational level there were good selection processes and officers were well trained and well equipped. However, improvements needed to be made in the selection of strategic and tactical firearms commanders, and strategic firearms commanders would benefit from improved training.

There were twelve recommendations, including six for Chief Constables.

The six recommendations for Chief Constables were as follows:

*By 31 July 2024, chief constables should make sure there is access to both specialist strategic firearms commanders and specialist tactical firearms commanders, through a 24-hour rota covering their region.*

The North East region were currently understrength in both Specialist Strategic and Tactical Firearms commanders. There were insufficient qualified officers to provide a 24-hour rota covering the region. An uplift in trained commanders was required to effectively achieve the recommendation. Identification and recruitment of potential candidates for specialist roles within the force was ongoing.

*By 31 October 2023, all chief constables should make sure the armed response vehicle asset tracking equipment, as provided by Counter Terrorism Policing, is available and used in their forces. They should train relevant staff in its use.*

The Firearms Support Unit were currently using the equipment recommended for ARV asset tracking (Airbox Mosaic) and had been operating this for the past three years. All relevant staff had access and were trained in its use. The contract was up for renewal in September 2024.

*By 31 December 2023, all chief constables should make sure that all strategic and tactical firearms commanders have observed the firearms tactics and the use of specialist munitions they can authorise, before being operationally deployed.*



All commanders were given a live demonstration of Tactics on initial training courses, this included the use of specialist munitions. Commanders could not operationally deploy unless they had successfully completed initial courses.

*By 31 December 2023, chief constables should make sure that the annual accreditation process for strategic and tactical firearms commanders includes familiarisation with any new weapons systems and observation of any new tactics or specialist munitions the force has introduced or is planning to introduce.*

This recommendation would be implemented immediately into command training and included in yearly sign off for commanders.

*With immediate effect, chief constables should improve senior officer oversight of their armouries, including an independent annual audit.*

Robust armoury procedures were in place which included senior officer oversight. A review of procedures had been conducted.

*With immediate effect, chief constables, through their armed policing governance structure, should make sure that all armed deployment records are stored and auditable.*

There was a set governance to record all armed deployments using the chronicle system which included electronic storage of all firearms logs, recorded briefings and associated paperwork.

## **11. Forward Plan – Open Session**

The Forward Plan had been noted.

## **12. Any Other Business**

There was no other business to discuss.

## **13. Date and Time of next meeting**

The next meeting would take place on Thursday 28 September 2023 – 12.30pm – Middle Engine Lane/Teams.