



NORTHUMBRIA PCC MINUTES

Title

Business Meeting

Date

25 January 2024

Location

Teams/MEL

Duration

4pm-4.40pm

Present:

Kim McGuinness – Police and Crime Commissioner
Vanessa Jardine – Chief Constable (CC)
Jayne Meir – Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)
Ruth Durham – Chief of Staff of the OPCC
Adrian Pearson – Director of Planning and Delivery (OPCC)
Tanya Reade – Corporate Governance Manager (NP)
Kevin Laing – Joint Chief Finance Officer
Alastair Simpson – ACC (Crime and Safeguarding) (NP)
Deb Alderson – ACC (Force Coordination) (NP)
Mark Hall – Chief Superintendent (NP)
Steven Hume – Director of the VRU
Vicki Wilson – Minute Taker (OPCC)

OPEN SESSION

1. Minutes of the open session of Business Meeting held on 20 December 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. National Issues Impacting on Policing

The CC highlighted the issues regarding stop and search with transgender individuals. It was noted that there was no clear guidance from central government which defined sex. The CC would bring this to the attention of the Home Office.

4. Violence Reduction Unit Update (VRU)

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

Current VRU activity derived from findings from the annual Strategic Needs Assessment and was delivered via the Response Strategy. The key findings had been outlined.



Between October 2022 and September 2023, levels of violence increased by 4% in Northumbria. Offences involving a knife had also increased by 12%. However, the rate in which violence had increased had started to slow. This slowing of growth was more evident in the most recent quarter, suggesting that the seasonal violence fund activities and other interventions were having an impact in the targeted areas.

At the same time as rates of violence had been slowing, there had also been a reduction in homicides in Northumbria, reducing by 28%. However the cost of violence in Northumbria was over £600 million.

Further analysis had been requested into the stop and search data with a particular focus on the percentage where offensive weapons had been found.

A breakdown of serious violence offences showed reductions in sexual assaults (8%) and attempted murders (23%), with all other offences increasing, notably robberies (32.7%), threats to kill (19.5%), and rape (6.5%).

As in previous periods, a third of offences of serious violence in Northumbria were domestic related, with 7,367 offences.

Appropriate plans were in place to tackle these issues. This would include work with relevant partners and early intervention with young people.

The draft Northumbria Serious Violence Response Strategy 2024 - 2029 had been produced and was currently being circulated to partners for comments.

The DCC felt it was important to note that although knife crime had higher percentages in other areas across the country, it remained an issue in Northumbria and needed to be tackled appropriately with priority areas; whether this be a universal approach or whether a more targeted approach towards young people should be the focus. The PCC expressed the ideal would be to cover both areas, however VRU funding was mainly targeted toward early interventions in young people. The VRU Director advised there were resources to cover all bases and discussions were in place to ensure these were communicated with the correct partners to have the most impact.

The CC queried whether it was a risk that the Serious Violence Duty needed to be implemented by the end of January 2024. The CC was advised that all relevant plans were in place to comfortably meet this timeline.

The CC queried what plans were in place to evaluate comparative annual work to ensure positive impacts. The CC was advised there was an external evaluator, on a three year contract. This would be carried out by Rocket Science and they would provide an annual report by the end of the financial year.

Following a query from ACC (Crime and Safeguarding), the Director of the VRU advised that more discussions needed to be had with hospitals regarding the Serious Violence Duty and how their data should be compiled to allow for a more accurate analysis.



5. HMICFRS Publications

Report on Criminal Justice Alliance's Super-Complaint; Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 and independent scrutiny of stop and search

Chief Superintendent highlighted the main points from the report.

In November 2023, a refresh of the IIS procedure on the use of Section 60 searches was undertaken to reinvigorate and encourage the use.

From November 2023 four Section 60 authorities had been put in place. A total of 29 searches had been conducted. This resulted in five arrests (two drugs, two offensive weapons, and one robbery).

As a result of the super complaint, there had been 10 recommendations where further development was required for Northumbria's approach to utilising section 60. These had been outlined in a separate appendix.

The CC advised that to offer assurance, plans were in place to ensure section 60 searches would be ratified by a Superintendent, appropriate time was allocated to these, and appropriate community engagement before and after the section 60 would take place.

An inspection of the effectiveness of the police and law enforcement bodies' response to group-based child sexual exploitation in England and Wales

ACC (Crime and Safeguarding) highlighted the main points from the report.

In March 2022, the then Home Secretary requested HMICFRS undertake an inspection under section 54 (2B) of the Police Act 1996. The terms of reference were to inspect the police and other law enforcement bodies in England and Wales and consider how effectively they responded to victims and perpetrators of group-based child sexual exploitation. Nine recommendations and one area for improvement (AFI) resulted from the inspection; four recommendations and the AFI were assigned to chief constables. These had been outlined in a separate appendix.

Meeting the needs of victims in the criminal justice system: An inspection of how well the police, the Crown Prosecution Service and the Probation Service support victims of crime.

ACC (Crime and Safeguarding) highlighted the main points from the report.

The inspection assessed whether the police, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and the Probation Service understand what victims need, whether they meet those needs and whether they provide a good quality service. Six recommendations resulted from the



inspection, one was assigned to chief constables. These had been highlighted in a separate appendix.

6. Joint Strategic Risk Register

The DCC highlighted the main points from the report.

A key change had been made following concerns regarding compromise of security perimeter devices that could lead to a compromise of the Force core network and a breach of confidentiality and integrity of Force data, and subsequent impact to national systems. Based on the evidence currently available, the likelihood of further compromise was assessed as medium (the Force was actively managing the risk as was practicable). The overall assessment of the thematic risk had been considered and it was determined that the likelihood remained medium and impact high.

Following a query from the PCC, the CC advised there was a clear direction, however there wasn't yet full confidence in the strategy. It was hoped that this would eventually include assurance of a plan and structure being in place.

7. Group Revenue Monitoring Q3

The joint Chief Finance Officer highlighted the workforce budget including both police officers and police staff.

Police Officer and Staff overtime positions (including Elected Time Off) were currently reflecting an under-spend of £0.241m. This position included the anticipated impact of the Sunderland Newcastle derby, Champions Leagues games, and an increase in requests for mutual aid from other Forces to support their operation activity. This had resulted in an overall positive position.

The forecast in relation to External Training had been reduced by £0.256m.

A credit of £0.242m had been received from Airwave following the outcome of the Competition and Market Authority investigation into Motorola's charges for mobile radio network services for the period August to December 2023.

In relation to OPCC revenue, additional investment interest of £0.355m was forecast due to above-budget interest rates achieved for the year, following successive increases in the bank rate during 2023 by the Bank of England.

The Key Decision requested the PCC note the Group forecast outturn of £347.537m which was based on payments processed to date and current projections, against a revised 2023/24 budget of £348.830m which reflected an in-year underspend position of £1.293m.

The PCC approved the Key Decision.



8. Capital Monitoring Q3

The Chief Finance Officer highlighted the table of figures outlining the scheme expenditure for 2023/24. At Q3, £6.255m had been re-phased into the new MTFS capital programme estimates for 2024/25 to 2027/28.

Capital Monitoring variances had been outlined and broken down into three categories:

- Building Works
- Digital Policing and Digital Transformation
- Vehicle and Equipment

The under-spend on the capital programme would impact mainly on prudential borrowing which would be £6.372m lower than forecast within the capital budget for 2023/24.

The Key Decision requested that the PCC note the Capital Monitoring Q3 position as at 31 December 2023.

The PCC approved the Key Decision.

9. Forward Plan – Open Session

The Forward Plan had been noted.

10. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

11. Date and Time of next meeting

The next meeting would take place on Thursday 29 February – 2pm – Middle Engine Lane/Teams.