



NORTHUMBRIA PCC MINUTES

Title

Business Meeting

Date

21 January 2025

Location

Teams/MEL

Duration

1.15pm-2.25pm

Present:

Susan Dungworth – Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
Clare Penny Evans – Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner
Vanessa Jardine – Chief Constable (CC)
Jayne Meir – Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)
Ruth Durham – Chief of Staff of the OPCC
Kevin Laing – Joint Chief Finance Officer (JCFO)
Joscelin Lawson – ACO for Corporate Services
Steven Hume (Director of Violence Reduction Unit)
Sarah Robson – Staff Officer (NP)
Tanya Reade – Corporate Governance Manager (NP)
Vicki Wilson – Minute Taker (OPCC)

OPEN SESSION

1. Minutes of the open session of Business Meeting held on 12 November 2024

The minutes were agreed as a true record.

2. Matters Arising

The ASB training with the Neighbourhood Policing Team would be followed up in due course once dates were made available.

3. National Issues Impacting on Policing

The White Paper had not yet been made available from the Home Office, regarding the Police Landscape Reform. There was a meeting scheduled on 11 February regarding this however, indicating it was likely due around this time.

The PCC attended a transport meeting with the North East Combined Authority and expressed views that there were already effective groups established to deal with issues regarding women's safety and these should be built upon in order to strengthen and improve their resources. The CC advised that extra powers had now been given to Nexus to deal with issues on the metro.



The PCC noted that a meeting with the British Transport Police would be convened in the near future to strengthen partnerships and collaborative work moving forward.

The PCC advised that funding information from the Home Office had still not been confirmed.

The PCC referenced the Victim and Prisoners Act, and specifically highlighted the change to Section 5 which would now include a 56 day response, and also placed a requirement for agencies to have a complaints procedure in place. Once implemented, the PCC was keen to find out if this was having an impact upon staffing and resources.

The PCC noted the recent announcement of closed case reviews for survivors of sexual abuse and felt there had been a focus on grooming victims. The CC had not received any specific information to confirm this.

The PCC queried whether there had been any follow ups since the murder trial in Southport. The CC confirmed that meetings with the CC of Merseyside had taken place prior to the trial, and extra resources had been put into place in Northumbria as a precaution, however there had been no official request to attend specific meetings since the guilty plea.

4. Violence Reduction Update (VRU)

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

Although the Home Office had announced the continuation of funding for Violence Reduction Units, the exact settlement had not yet been confirmed. The VRU would however be required to provide a new Delivery Plan by the end of March 2025. This would be shared with the force upon completion.

Whilst young people remained a focus, there would be tweaks made to the Delivery Plan to ensure there was a balance for older people and services they could utilise.

New guidance would also be produced, and it was thought this would include the addition of a VAWG strategy, however the VRU already had this element established, and had been asked by the Home Office to assist other areas where appropriate with implementing this. The PCC noted that the Victims Commissioner had been complimentary of the work carried out by the VRU in Northumbria.

Regarding the Serious Violence Duty, revisions were underway, with new guidance anticipated by the end of March 2025. At present, it remained uncertain whether additional funding would be allocated to support the Duty. This would continue to be monitored.

The VRU planned to work with the force regarding a formal out of court pathway to be used following testing on arrest. Custody diversion had already been implemented at Forth Banks however the engagement had remained low.



A&E Navigator work continued and had now expanded across the region.

The proposed establishment of Presentation Partnerships and Youth Future Hubs were still in the planning phase. While further clarity was needed on how these new initiatives would integrate with existing structures, the Home Office had indicated that established local arrangements should play a central role in their implementation.

The VRU had recently completed a County Lines film which would be launched at Northern Stage.

5. Group Revenue Monitoring Q3

The Joint Chief Finance Officer highlighted the main points from the report.

Based on the Q3 spend, the forecast outturn for the Chief Constable revenue would be an in-year underspend of £3.003m. Within this position there were some budgetary pressures and underspends resulting in the net outturn position.

Workforce budgets remained a key focus around the forecasting and profiling as they formed the majority of the overall force budget. The overarching workforce budget position including allowances was projected to be £0.557m under the budgeted position.

Police Officer overtime was currently projected to be over the revised budget by a combined total of £1.415m. Core Police Officer overtime was forecast to overspend by £1.692m. This figure included £1.109m (excluding bank holidays) of Officer overtime relating to Operation Navette(1-3)/Plutus. Operation Easton (house explosion in Newcastle) occurred during the last quarter. The operation involved extensive disaster victim identification work and mutual aid support from other Forces. The overtime cost of the operation was approximately £0.150m and had been funded by utilising the Force contingency.

The projected year-end budget position of core OPCC revenue and Supporting Services was currently forecast to be an in-year underspend of £0.071m. This was in line with the position reported at Q2. OPCC core budgets remained a forecast underspend of £0.046m (2.42%) due to underspends within the salary budgets as a result of vacant posts and a secondment; this underspend was offset by increases in the Rent, APCC Annual contribution and External Audit fees.

Supporting Services budgets were reflecting an underspend of £0.025m; this was made up of an underspend on the Regional SARC Contract, where inflationary increases applied were less than estimated, offset by pressures against the misconduct panel hearing expenses budget which were greater this year than expected.

Capital Financing was reflecting an underspend of £1.264m against the revised budget. This underspend had increased by £0.750m from the position reported at Q2 but remained across borrowing and investment interest budgets.



The PCC was asked to note the Group forecast outturn of £373.766mm based on payments processed to date and current projections against a revised 2024/25 budget of £378.104m, which reflected an in-year underspend position of £4.338m. The PCC approved the Key Decision.

6. Capital Monitoring Q3

The JCFO highlighted the main points from the report.

The Capital Outturn Report for 2023/24 reported slippage of £4.723m into the 2024/25 financial year, bringing the capital programme 2024/25 to a total of £34.663m.

The movement in the forecast outturn position at Q3 was currently projecting a reduction in expenditure of £4.933m, against the position reported at Q2.

The revised capital budget as at Q3 was therefore £20.012m, aligned with the latest forecast outturn for the year. Budgets had been re-profiled to the MTFs 2025/26 to 2028/29 Capital Programme where appropriate.

An update of the Building Works had been outlined, along with an update of the works involved in the Digital Policing and Digital Transformation projects, Vehicles & Equipment, and Funded Capital Schemes.

The PCC was asked to note the 2024/25 Capital monitoring position for Q3 as at 31 December 2024. The PCC approved the Key Decision.

7. Update from JIAC (Joint Independent Audit Committee)

The JCFO highlighted the main points from the report following the JIAC meeting that had been held on 18 November 2024.

On the agenda were scheduled reports relating to the signing off of the 2023/24 financial statements and Annual Governance Statements. These reports were deferred from the agenda to the February meeting as the external audit had not been finalised.

There were no issues to report.

8. Joint Strategic Risk Register

The Chief of Staff from the OPCC highlighted the main points from the report.

Reference was made to Appendix B which outlined the identified risks for the OPCC. There were 3 areas: Finance, Governance, and Partnership & Collaboration.

Finance had been deemed as a high risk due to the funding formula used by government to distribute grant funding to police forces in England and Wales possibly leading to a reduction in the percentage of central government police funding allocated to Northumbria.



Partnership & Collaboration had been deemed a medium risk due to the potential budget pressures within partner organisations which could affect collaborative work moving forward. This could in turn lead to a reduction in public confidence.

There were no risks identified within Governance.

The DCC highlighted the main points with reference to the force.

A particular high risk was in regards to the Digital Policing Systems. The DCC outlined examples of the work being carried out to tackle this issue.

Another area of high risk was regarding Finance. Reduction in central government funding as announced in the annual Home Office Police Funding Settlement. The funding settlement currently provided certainty for only one financial year and carried continued long-term uncertainty over several funding strands, including Uplift and Pensions.

The DCC advised that although the Infrastructure and Assets had been deemed as a medium risk, there had been an issue with machinery since the report had been written. Work had been put into place to tackle this and it was hoped this would remain a medium risk within the next report.

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 13 March – 10.30am-12pm – Victory House/Teams.