

<b>CAMBRIDGESHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL</b>	<b>Agenda Item No. 10</b>
<b>9<sup>th</sup> October 2019</b>	<b>Public Report</b>

## Report of Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner

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### COUNTY LINES

#### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Police and Crime Panel (the “Panel”) on how the Commissioner is holding the Chief Constable to account for the work Cambridgeshire Constabulary (the “Constabulary”) and their partners are undertaking to tackle county lines.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Panel is recommended to note the contents of this report.

#### 3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 3.1 Item 6 – to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, by the Police and Crime Commissioner in connection with the discharge of the Commissioner’s functions.

Item 8 – to support the effective exercise of the functions of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

#### 4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Government has defined County Lines is defined as: ‘*County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons*’.
- 4.2 County lines is a major, cross-cutting issue involving drugs, violence, gangs, safeguarding, criminal and sexual exploitation, modern slavery, and missing persons. The response to tackle it involves the police, the National Crime Agency (NCA), a wide range of Government departments, local government agencies and voluntary and community sector organisations.
- 4.3 Serious Violence Strategy – The Government launched the Serious Violence Strategy in April 2018. The Strategy identified four key pillars that need to have focus, these being: County Lines and Drugs Markets; Early Intervention and Prevention; Supporting Communities and Local Partnerships; and Effective Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice resolution. The Strategy sets out the Government’s response to serious violence and recent increases in knife crime, gun crime and homicide, and includes a range of actions to tackle county lines.

#### 5. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER’S ROLE – HOLDING TO ACCOUNT

- 5.1 The Commissioner is able to set the strategic direction and objectives of the Constabulary through his Police and Crime Plan (the “Plan”). Improving partnership working to tackle drug related crime is within the Offenders theme of his Plan. By law, the Commissioner is unable to get involved in operational policing matters or direct the Chief Constable in respect of this. The Chief Constable is responsible for the Constabulary’s strategy to tackle drug related offences, including county line matters.
- 5.2 The Commissioner gains assurance on the work of the Chief Constable and the Constabulary, and their work with partners at a regional and national level, namely the Eastern Region Specialist Operations Unit (ERSOU) and the NCA respectively, through the processes outlined in this report.
- 5.3 The Constabulary’s report to the Commissioner’s Business Co-ordination Board meeting (June 2019) on the Offenders theme in the Plan provides information on how police enforcement has disrupted offenders and deters would-be offenders in respect of county lines.
- 5.4 The Commissioner also gains assurance through going out on observation shifts with the Constabulary’s officers and staff and through sight of other operational information provided by the Constabulary on a frequent basis.
- 5.5 The Constabulary’s Force Management Statement (FMS) contains information on county lines (page 53). FMS is a self-assessment that Chief Constables prepare and give to Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) each year. FMS is the Chief Constable’s statement and explanation of:
- the demand that their police force expects to face in the next four years;
  - how their force will change and improve its workforce and assets to cope with that demand;
  - how their force will improve its efficiency to make sure the gap between future demand and future capability is as small as it can reasonably be
- 5.6 ERSOU is a joint arrangement between seven forces - Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Kent and Bedfordshire, to provide one serious and organised crime unit for the Eastern Region. ERSOU is run by a management board where all forces are equally represented and decisions are made with the unanimous consent of all forces. The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner attends the management board on behalf of the Commissioner.
- 5.7 Commissioners are provided with information from the NCA directly from the Director General and via the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) through means of correspondence and presentations. The APCC has a number of portfolio groups led by a Commissioner, with information and best practice across all of the portfolios shared with Commissioners and OPCCs via the APCC.

## **6. PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS**

- 6.1 Partnership arrangements are also key to tackling county line related issues. The Commissioner chairs the Countywide Community Safety Strategic Board (the “Board”).
- 6.2 The overall aim of the Board, notwithstanding their statutory obligations, is to provide a multi-agency strategic direction to enable the delivery of the Board’s key priorities to continue to make the communities of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough safer.
- 6.3 The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Board, sets out governance and membership

arrangements for the Board. Members include: Responsible Authorities, Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) Health and Wellbeing Boards, Safeguarding Boards and the Joint Youth Justice Management Board. Members are able to speak for their organisations with authority and have organisational responsibility around: resources, policy and practice matters, organisational and partnership performance monitoring. At the Chairs discretion others may be invited to attend all or part of the meeting, and to submit reports as required.

- 6.4 The ToR is supported by the Countywide Community Safety Agreement 2017-20 (the "Agreement"). In order to ensure transparency and allow partners to observe and understand the operation of the meeting, the documents are available on the Commissioner's website, along with meeting papers and approved minutes of the meeting from July 2018 onwards.
- 6.5 The Agreement sets out key cross cutting areas of work where the complexity or wider impact of those priority issues suggest that a countywide approach would add value. The model recognises that the Board are operating within an area of complexity in regard to leadership, governance, access, use of resources and accountability. In order to deliver the Agreement an effective model of collective leadership and delivery is required.
- 6.6 Several of the identified priorities already have existing multi-agency partnership arrangements in place that are ensuring a coordinated approach across organisations at a strategic level. This Agreement has built on these historic arrangements. The Board invites representatives from these Countywide Delivery Groups who manage high risk work streams to attend Board meetings in order to report on their work and request action from partners where appropriate.
- 6.7 The Governments Serious Violence Strategy was released in April 2018. Items on the Serious Violence Strategy, and the local response to the strategy have been take to the Board in April 2018, October 2018, April 2019 and July 2019. At the April 2019 and July 2019 meetings the Board considered county lines issues in respect of the Serious Violence Strategy and Think Communities. The purpose of taking these reports was to ensure partners were aware of the Strategy, and the need for them to work in partnership in line with the recommendations within the Strategy. These reports can be found on the Commissioner's website on the link below.
- 6.8 The April 2019 report, '*Developing a Public Health Approach to Tackling Serious Street Based Violence*' sets out the Context and National Strategy and details of the four key pillars - County Lines and Drugs Markets; Early Intervention and Prevention; Supporting Communities and Local Partnerships; and Effective Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice resolution. The July report, '*Think Communities and place-based leadership*', recommended partners engage with discussion around operating a single place-based partnership. This reflects the need identified in the Government's Serious Violence Strategy for a more concerted effort with respect to prevention across partners. An item on the Strategy was taken to the Board, in order to ensure partners were aware of the Strategy, and working in line with the recommendations in the Strategy. The Strategy, and serious violence has subsequently been taken to the Board a further three times to ensure continued progress against the Strategy, and to identify any gaps in action.
- 6.9 Following the April 2019 report, the Board supported the recommendation to establish a Serious Violence Working Group to work to the Government's Serious Violence Strategy. This will look across work of various other Countywide Delivery Groups including the Joint Youth Justice Management Board, Child Criminal Exploitation Delivery Group, Organised Crime and Modern Slavery Delivery Group and the Drug and Alcohol Misuse Board. Should any gaps be identified the Serious Violence Working Group will look to coordinate action. This Group is co-chaired by a senior officer from Cambridge City Council who is also the Chair of Cambridge City CSP and the Constabulary's South Area Commander.
- 6.10 The Commissioner is clear that County Lines is not a community safety issue alone, but also one of health and wellbeing and of safeguarding. Many of these Delivery Groups looking at aspects of the issue and also report back to other statutory boards – the Health and Wellbeing Boards and the Safeguarding Boards.
- 6.11 The Health and Wellbeing and the Safeguarding Boards have their own statutory obligations

and manage known risk / high risk issues. It is a key role of Responsible Authorities and CSPs to deliver interventions and preventative work in the places that they operate, particularly where there are identified multiple vulnerabilities. As described in the Agreement, and in the ToR, the Board, CSPs are scrutinised by their local authority's relevant Committee, which provides key Elected Member involvement in the process.

- 6.12 The Commissioner is also utilising his grants and commissioning processes to support development of countywide preventative approaches to crime and managing multiple vulnerability. Crime and disorder reduction grants available to CSPs require that money is used to develop and industrialise evidence based prevention approaches. As place-based partnerships, CSPs are best placed to implement these interventions, and it is important that elected members hold CSPs to account for doing this.
- 6.13 The Commissioner provided funding for the Healthy Schools Support Service which offers evidence based and quality controlled countywide support to schools in order to build resilience in young people, enabling them to reduce their own risks of becoming involved in any aspect of county lines.

## **7. GOVERNMENT FUNDING / INITIATIVES**

- 7.1 Early Intervention Youth Fund – The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) coordinated a partnership bid to the Early Intervention Youth Fund, and were awarded £384k in order to deliver interventions to young people at high risk. This will fund a team of specialist workers within the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Youth Offending Service who will develop and support trusted relationships with young people with complex needs who are at significant risk of criminal exploitation and youth violence. This trusted relationships approach is an evidence based approach that involves professionals building trusted relationships with young people in order to support diversion away from high risk behaviours and the criminal justice system. This funding will be managed by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Youth Offending Service, with independent monitoring and evaluation provided to the OPCC to ensure the intended outcomes are being met.
- 7.2 Youth Endowment Fund – The OPCC remains involved and supportive of bid development for more prevention focused based on other local programmes piloted with OPCC funding that have been successful. This fund will have several bidding rounds over the next 10 years, and the OPCC will continue to encourage a partnership approach to bid development and co-ordination.
- 7.3 The OPCC have supported the on-going running and leadership for a bid development group by the Head of Youth Services for Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council to ensure that all are 'bid-ready' for any future money that will be made available over the next 10 years.
- 7.4 At these bid development meetings, the OPCC have developed links and built a partnership approach ensuring the involvement of district councils / CSPs as well as voluntary sector organisations to ensure communities are involved and see the benefits.

## **8. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

- 8.1 Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan

<http://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/police-crime-plan/police-crime-plan-2017-2020/>

'Serious Violence Strategy', HM Government, April 2018

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/serious-violence-strategy.pdf>

<https://www.cambs.police.uk/assets/PDFs/About/Transparency/AboutUs-OurForce-ForceManagementStatement-2019.pdf>

Countywide Community Safety Strategic Board, Agreement and meeting reports

<https://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/accessing-information/countywide-community-safety-strategic-board/>

ERSOU - <https://ersou.police.uk/>

National Crime Agency - <https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/>

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