

CAMBRIDGESHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL	Agenda Item No. 6
2nd December 2020	Public Report

Report of Acting Police and Crime Commissioner

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ACTING POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER’S RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS FROM THE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel (the “Panel”) with responses to questions they have raised both on reports submitted to the Acting Police and Crime Commissioner’s (the “Acting Commissioner”) Business Co-ordination Board (the “Board”) meetings and on other matters.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Panel is recommended to note the 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 Under Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Panel has a role in scrutinising the Acting Commissioner’s exercise of his statutory functions. The Policing Protocol Order 2011 (the “Protocol”) is clear that an effective, constructive working relationship between Commissioners, Chief Constables, and Panels is more likely to be achieved where clarity of understanding are at their highest as this will enhance policing for local communities. The Protocol goes on to state that whilst Panels provide checks and balances in relation to the performance of the Acting Commissioner, they do not scrutinise the Chief Constable. However, in the spirit of the Protocol, in particular in relation to enhancing community confidence, this report provides responses of an operational policing nature, where appropriate to do so, for the Panel’s information only.

5. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET

Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report Month 5 2020-21, Agenda Item 5.0, Business Co-ordination Board, 28th October 2020

- 5.1 Question: Ref para 3.2.4 - comment stating there has been a reduction in the expected number of leavers - what changed to allow / enable them to stay?

Question: Ref para 4.1 - Revenue Outturn, there is a £453K underspend on protecting the vulnerable, why and does this impact the efficiency of the system.

Question: Ref para 4.1 – Vacancies, many different types are any critical?

Question: Ref para 4.2.1 - holiday and overtime variance not in line with expectations and there is ongoing work that should be completed by September reporting but this is an October paper - has this work been completed and if so, what was the explanation / outcome?

Question: Ref para 4.2.2 - How are the vacancies within the Victim and Witness Hub impacting on: the performance of the Team; the health and wellbeing of the Team; the quality of service victims and witnesses are receiving?

Question: under Int and Spec Crime - comment - further 100K underspend as the result of an accounting error - what happened and has this been addressed so it will not be repeated?

Question: Protecting Vulnerable - Officer strength under by 21.23 FTE - this is a core area of police work, what is being done to address this shortfall? How is this impacting on: the performance of the Team; the health and wellbeing of the Team; the quality of service the public are receiving?

Question: Demand Hub – 13 FTE officers under and a high number of leavers. Given the performance concerns previously expressed within this area and the improvement plan in place how is this impacting on: the delivery and success of the improvement plan; the performance of the Team; the health and wellbeing of the Team; the quality of service victims and witnesses are receiving

Question: Northern Hub - is 15.6 FTE over Southern Hub is 13.48FTE over - yet predicting a significant underspend - can that be accurate? Is there a need to review and/or realign officer numbers with need and activity demands?

Response to all the above questions: As given in the Protocol, the Chief Constable is responsible for the financial management of the Constabulary within the framework of the agreed budget allocation. The Acting Commissioner holds the Chief Constable to account to assure himself that the Chief Constable has appropriate control over the budget.

In doing so, the Acting Commissioner has held the Chief Constable to account for how he manages the Constabulary's budget at the Board meetings, with monthly Budget Monitoring reports being discussed in detail. The Panel will have also seen the series of Budget Monitoring reports that have been submitted to the Board meetings during the current financial year, and will be aware that they are comprehensive and provide a lot of detail on operational policing units.

Discussions at the Board meetings has enabled the Acting Commissioner to raise a number of questions both with the Chief Constable and his Director of Finance and Resources. Many of the questions above that were posed by members of the Panel were asked by the Acting Commissioner at the Board meetings. The Panel are therefore asked to refer to the budget reports and the minutes of the Board meetings.

In addition, the Acting Commissioner and the Chief Constable has an Internal Audit programme which reports on aspects of financial management. The External Auditors also report on financial management in the preparation of the annual statement of accounts, both of which are overseen by the Independent Joint Audit Committee (JAC). Reports and minutes of the JAC meetings can be found on the Acting Commissioner's website.

Question: Ref para 4.2 - 'Fleet, are vehicles subject to serious excess when crashed on blue light duty? From the same section who are the Chiltern Transport Consortium, and do they just provide vehicles, or is insurance provided as well. Insurance for vehicles was a major cost concern only a year ago. What has changed?'

Response: Yes, Constabulary vehicles are subject to excess. From 1 October 2020, the excess per vehicle/collision is £500k (£375k previous year). This is a national issue not just a Cambridgeshire one. The Chiltern Transport Consortium is run by Thames Valley Police and provides a cross-border shared service and all fleet support functions for five police forces: the Constabulary, Thames Valley, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, and the Civil Nuclear Constabulary. Chiltern will manage any insurance claims and deal with repairs on the Constabulary's behalf. Insurance premiums are managed by the Constabulary in collaboration with the South East and Eastern Region Police Insurance Consortium (SEERPIC) which covers Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, Kent, Norfolk, Suffolk, Sussex, Surrey and Thames Valley Police. The Constabulary get the same insurance terms as the SEERPIC members but insurance is very expensive.

5.2 Question: Ref para 6.2 – 'Purchase Ledger. A general question, in 2019 we were informed that greater use would be made of the Kent CC Consortium for purchasing. Did this take place and are there any issues we should be aware of?'

Response: The Revenue and Capital monitoring reports provide detail on the performance of the Purchase Ledger Team, which deals with the prompt payment of invoices.

In respect of the reference to the Kent CC Consortium, further clarification on the question is required. If the question relates to general procurement, the 7Force Procurement Team procures and manages high quality, value for money contracts.. They have a 'pipeline' of contracts coming up for renewal and their aim is to align contracts between the 7Forces, where possible, in order to generate savings.

6. CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Strategic Risk Register, Agenda Item 7.0, Business Co-ordination Board, 28th October 2020

6.1 Question: In relation to the Strategic Risk Register report, I note a new addition to this risk SR2.1 Criminal Justice agencies are unable to deliver swift justice as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Could the OPCC explain if members need to be concerned about court cases being delayed as a result of Covid19 and thus the impacts this is having on resource. Have we seen a significant increase in cases not proceeding through the courts or being delayed long term? If So, what is the current backlog and are we confident with this risk level? The report touches on disengagement as a result, is this a risk in itself?

Response: This is a very relevant question in the current circumstances.

The Cambridgeshire Criminal Justice Board (CCJB) has been meeting regularly throughout the pandemic. The CCJB governance structure has seen the CCJB Efficiency Group, chaired by HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS), meeting fortnightly and the CCJB Delivery Group, chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable, meeting monthly to oversee the recovery of the criminal justice system locally and the risks the change in working practices creates to the delivery of swift justice.

The CCJB, chaired by the Acting Commissioner, has met on three separate occasions and maintains oversight of the work of the sub-groups. These multi-agency forums bring Criminal Justice partners together and include representation from HMCTS, Crown Prosecution Service, Police, National Probation Service, Youth Offending Service, and the Witness Service.

The CCJB Delivery Group is also exception reporting into the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) to ensure that wider partners are appraised of the criminal justice landscape.

In addition to local meetings, both the Acting Commissioner and the OPCC Senior Criminal Justice Policy Manager are attending an array of national meetings. These include a fortnightly local criminal justice board chair's meeting (LCJB), National Criminal Justice Board meetings and national HMCTS recovery planning meetings.

Whilst the Magistrates Court have been able to deal with the backlog that was accumulated during the height of the pandemic, the Crown Court is still experiencing challenges, which has resulted in trials being adjourned. The Crown Court challenges arise due to the amount of people involved in running a trial and ensuring that social distancing can be adhered to and the court rooms are Covid secure. Cambridgeshire is in a stronger position than many with two operational Crown Courts and a potentially third court from January 2021.

The inevitable delay in listing cases cannot fail to have an impact on the emotional wellbeing of victims and witnesses. The Victim & Witness Hub is engaged with those victims/witnesses who have been affected by these delays. This has created additional pressure on the department and this is being reviewed by the Constabulary.

The Cambs Victims Service website is being kept up to date with local court information and support services to support those affected.

The Acting Commissioner has sought the Chief Constable's response to the issue of court delays, what action is being taken, and discussed the consequential impact on victims at several Board meetings over the last few months.

7. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

Strategic Risk Register, Agenda Item 7.0, Business Co-ordination Board, 28th October 2020

7.1 Question: Strategic Risk Register - How is the effectiveness of the risk reduction measures indicated monitored and evaluated?

Response: The Strategic Risk Register is reviewed on a quarterly basis and reported to the Board every six months. All the Strategic Risks have a member of the Senior Management Team as risk owner and they are responsible for updating the risk register including identifying any mitigation for the risk.

As the Panel will be aware, the Internal Audit programme reviewed Risk Management during 2019/20 and the report received a 'substantial assurance', and noted "*There is a well-defined governance structure in place that includes the Risk Review Board and the Force Executive Board to scrutinise the Constabulary risks, and an overarching governance structure to monitor risk at both the Constabulary and the OPCC, which is made up of the Board and the Joint Audit Committee*".

The Board receives regular reports that provide detail on how risks are being managed and mitigated.

7.2 Question: References made to the Ethics, Equality and Inclusion group - is this up and running and how do frontline staff engage with this group?

Response: This group is now convened as the Constabulary's Ethics, Equality and Inclusion Group as a governing body and meets quarterly. The group has representation from all of the Constabulary's departments, including local policing commands, along with police officer and staff association representatives. The Acting Commissioner is also represented on the group.

8. INDEPENDENT SCRUTINY GROUP

Police and Crime Plan Communities Theme - OPCC work to deliver partnership support, Agenda Item 8.0, Business Co-ordination Board, 28th October 2020

- 8.1 Question: Ref para 4.3 – ‘Constabulary taken first steps to get this Independent Group in place’. What is the selection process for membership of this group? How will their independence and community representation and engagement be ensured? How will the public be able to engage with this?

Response: The response to the Constabulary’s press release in October 2020 seeking members for the group has resulted in interest from a range of individuals (i.e the public) and representative organisations across the county.

The aim for the group is to have approximately 50 members who will come from all backgrounds, live throughout the county, be of all ages and be completely independent of the Constabulary and the Acting Commissioner. Ultimately, they will be reflective of the community the Constabulary serves. This pool of members will be made up of vetted and unvetted members and will all receive training on the purpose of the scrutiny panel and the legislation that is involved. All members will sign a confidentiality agreement to ensure the integrity of what is seen and discussed at the meetings. There will be an independent Chair, elected by the group itself.

The Constabulary are currently engaging, through a series of virtual introductory sessions, with those who have shown an interest in participating.

Findings from the scrutiny sessions will be published on both the Constabulary and the OPCC’s website.

9. COUNTYWIDE COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGIC BOARD

Police and Crime Plan Communities Theme - OPCC work to deliver partnership support, Agenda Item 8.0, Business Co-ordination Board, 28th October 2020

- 9.1 Ref para 5.1.1 - The Acting Commissioner held a meeting of the Countywide Community Safety Strategic Board (the “Countywide Board”) on the 20th October bringing together Responsible Authorities and representatives from the County’s Community Safety Partnerships and key strategic boards to consider current community safety concerns. The Countywide Board met for the first time in six months (previously scheduled meetings were removed from diaries to reduce the demand on the county’s senior leaders time during the Covid pandemic as oversight and governance of this work was in place in other forums), and the Commissioner was keen to ensure that organisations remained in a position to coordinate preventative work, as well as responded to emerging risks.

- 9.2 Question: What were the practical outcomes of this meeting?

Response: This is a helpful Panel question as it focuses on the Acting Commissioner’s role in bringing community safety partners together.

The Countywide Board provides a forum for the Acting Commissioner to help Responsible Authorities co-ordinate their statutory duties to reduce crime and disorder with partners giving updates making any requests for support.

As the Countywide Board has not met since January and Covid-19 has led to rapid, system wide change, the main focus of this meeting was to understand the current state of play in relation to key partnerships and workstreams and address any urgent requests for support. Partners shared new ways of working and key points from their updated strategic and delivery plans (factoring in the impact of Covid-19). Few requests for support were made.

Partners at the meeting were sighted on significant changes on the community safety horizon for 2021, and as a result partners agreed that the current Countywide Community Safety Agreement remained fit for purpose.

Partners were updated on the situation in relation to Crime and Disorder reductions grants for the 2021/22 financial year, allowing Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) to factor this in their future delivery or spending plans.

This meeting provided the Acting Commissioner with assurance that the cross-cutting community safety priorities continue to be managed appropriately.

The Acting Commissioner recognises that community safety sits in a wider landscape of socio-economic factors that must be considered holistically, and seeks to strike a balance between enabling and encouraging preventative work, whilst not impacting on partners abilities to respond and recover to Covid-19.

9.3 Question: Where are we with future funding for CSPs?

Response: A report detailing the current situation in relation to Crime and Disorder Reduction Grants made available to CSPs was circulated to the Countywide Board. The Acting Commissioner's approach has been to use these grants to drive local work to deliver system-wide, evidence-based transformation to better manage current and future demand.

A decision on the approach to Crime and Disorder Grant awards to CSPs for the financial year 2021/22 has not yet been made. A number of factors are playing into the decision-making process, and any decision will:

- Be dependent on the police grant settlement to be announced later in the year, as this funding comes from the main police grant, not a separate ring-fenced pot.
- Recognise that a new Commissioner, due to be elected in May 2021, will have the right to set out a direction of travel in line with their public mandate.
- Be mindful of the need to link the funding to outcomes and approaches set out in the Police and Crime Plan that a new Commissioner will set out.
- Factor in the additional demand pressures faced by all partners caused by the work to respond to, and recover from the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

10. CITIZENS IN POLICING – WATCH SCHEMES

Police and Crime Plan Communities Theme - OPCC work to deliver partnership support, Agenda Item 8.0, Business Co-ordination Board, 28th October 2020

10.1 Question: - Ref para 6.1 - More than 2,000 members of the public have now signed up to Cambridgeshire's Speedwatch scheme to help keep the county's roads safe. Volunteers continue to act as eyes and ears in communities alerting the Constabulary to local issues. The scheme continues to rely on the support of community volunteers and is proving an effective resource in tackling speeding. Are these schemes have any positive effects? How are they being evaluated?

Response: Community Speedwatch is a nationally accepted speed reduction measure, having a positive effect on driver behaviour. The College of Policing "what work's toolkit" suggests that Watch Schemes are effective in reducing crime by directly involving the community in activities to promote safety or assist directly with the detection of crime.

Locally, all performance monitoring / evaluation is completed by the Constabulary who review the number of sessions held and the percentage of speeding vehicles observed in a session, as well as perceptions and comments from Community Speedwatch teams at a community, county and Constabulary level. Between 2013, and 2020 (pre-lockdown), the number of vehicles observed speeding through Speedwatch sessions reduced from c.20% to c.5%.

Additionally, Community Speedwatch enables communities to establish the nature of any speeding problem or perceived speeding problem and take positive action on it. It provides data to the Parish, Town, and County Councils who can look at safe systems approaches to further reduce speeding in line with the Vision Zero strategy where necessary.

Where the Acting Commissioner has given funding, the primary purpose has been for the purchase of equipment to facilitate an increased number of scheme / volunteers, and these outputs have been demonstrated.

The Acting Commissioner continues to see the value of these schemes as a way to invest, engage with, and empower communities to act on issues that matter most to them. The growing numbers of volunteers suggest the schemes remain popular with residents and have a positive impact in relation to community resilience and community confidence in policing.

On a strategic level, over the past 12 months, the Acting Commissioner has used his leadership of the Vision Zero Partnership (previously the Road Safety Partnership) to implement a review of the partnerships structure and strategy, resulting in the adoption of a new strategy and new structure in July 2020. The strategy sees a commitment to an evidence-based approach to road safety with ongoing evaluation of partnership projects.

The strategy also makes a commitment to public involvement and development of road safety initiatives in line with the Think Communities approach.

11. FORENSIC COLLISION INVESTIGATION NETWORK SECTION 22A AGREEMENT

Forensic Collision Investigation Network S22A Agreement, Agenda Item 12.0, Business Co-ordination Board, 28th October 2020

- 11.1 Question: The report talks about Improved Investment and Income Generation Opportunities 4.7. Please could the OPCC tell me when they last looked at the charges it makes to insurance companies trying to obtain information on Road Traffic Collision (RTC) files. For example, those insurers seeking RTC reports and officer interviews (if any).

Response: The National Police Chief Council (NPCC) 'National Policing Guidelines on Charging for Police Services' have recommended minimum rates for a range of reports and we follow these guidelines.

12. NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING PROPOSALS

Proposed changes to Neighbourhood Policing in Cambridgeshire, Agenda Item 13.0, Business Co-ordination Board, 28th October 2020

- 12.1 Question: 'During the meeting to discuss the precept I asked the Acting Commissioner and the Chief Constable the assurance that as the public has had an increase on the policing precept of council tax year on year, and that the funding is still not at the right formula which could indicate that there will be further increases which our public will be asked to fund. I was told that the Acting Commissioner was asking for increase funding and that the public would not be constantly asked for increased funding. I also asked if the Chief Constable had the funding not just for the increase in police officers but also for support staff, I was told that they did do. Now we learn that we are losing half of our neighbourhood PCSO's and community safety team which causes concern over all the answers we have received as a panel and assurances. Could the Acting Commissioner explain why there is an apparent change in the information we have been provided with on this issue?'

Question: 'What role did the Acting Commissioner have in determining the scale and scope of these cuts? What input did the Commissioner have in shaping the cuts; is he convinced that the Chief Constable has made cuts in the right places (what options were considered?); and how will the Commissioner monitor the impacts, to ensure there are no unforeseen and unwanted side-effects?'

Response to both questions: In accordance with the Protocol, it is the Chief Constable's role to determine the staff mix that he requires to deliver policing within the budget set. Quite clearly it is the Acting Commissioner's role to be the voice of the people, to listen to their concerns and to make sure that the Chief Constable is aware of them and considers them in delivering

policing within Cambridgeshire. It is also the Acting Commissioner's role to hold the Chief Constable to account in delivering policing.

The Chief Constable announced his proposals on the 21st October 2020 and the staff consultation on this matter closes on the 20th November 2020.

The Acting Commissioner has received a number of concerns regarding the proposals from members of the public that he has put to the Chief Constable. The Acting Commissioner will continue to put any further concerns to the Chief Constable.

The Acting Commissioner will update the Panel when consultation has closed and the Chief has made his final determination.

- 12.2 Question: This item has been on the agenda for a very long time, but in its early stages, it was coupled with the proposal to use partnership deals with security firms, providing local supervision in Parishes. This would be funded by on-the-spot fines and revenue splits. A trial was run in Peterborough. Is this model still on a future plan?'

Response: The Constabulary are not aware of any partnership deals with security companies to provide cover in the parishes. They did set up a taxi marshalling scheme in the city centre for a short period of time but there was no revenue generation associated with that. Eye Parish raised the idea of employing a private company to patrol their village after a crime spike but this was covered by the Constabulary and they are not aware that the idea was ever progressed any further

13. COVID FUNDING AND POLICING RESPONSE

- 13.1 Question: Concerning the reduction in PCSOs I think at a time of insecurity with the pandemic we should not be looking now at reducing these numbers and losing experience officers who have local knowledge it is the time when we need continuity and security. Savings should be looked for elsewhere. As other public services are receiving additional funds to respond to the COVID-19 issues comparatively what additional funds have been provided to the police service in comparison to local government elsewhere in Cambridgeshire.

Question: The financial picture. What additional resources have been received by the police service during the current public health situation as the police service or in a good position to help and what additional requests have been put on the police service to educate the public, encourage public action and enforcement. No doubt there have been formal issues raised with the police service about social distancing and can we have some figures on these. What other public services are receiving additional funds to respond to the COVID-19 issues comparatively what additional funds have been provided to the police service say against local councils County, Combined Authority, unitary and district in the Cambridgeshire.

Response: The Panel has received numerous reports directly since April 2020 either directly in response to their questions or through sight of the Board reports and minutes, namely:

- 15th April 2020 - 'Printed Decision', Virtual informal telecon, Police and Crime Panel
- 30th April 2020 - 'Covid19 Constabulary Response', Agenda Item 5.0, Business Co-ordination Board
- 14th May 2020 – 'Printed Decision', Virtual informal telecon,
- 26th May 2020 - 'Covid-19 Response Update Constabulary', Agenda Item 6.0, Business Co-ordination Board
- 11th June 2020 – 'Monitoring the Delivery of the Acting Police and Crime Commissioner's Response to Covid-19 crisis', Police and Crime Panel

- 2nd July 2020 – ‘Constabulary Covid Update’, Agenda Item 9.0, Business Co-ordination Board
- 29th July – 28th October – updates in relation to operational policing matters contained in Constabulary reports to the Business Co-ordination Board and minutes of those meetings.

Therefore, the Panel are asked to refer to those reports and the minutes of those meetings.

It is not for the Acting Commissioner to comment on what additional funds other public bodies within the county have received to respond to the Covid-19 issues.

14. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

‘Police and Crime Plan 2017-20 – Community Safety and Criminal Justice’, Police and Crime Commissioner

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

‘National Policing Guidelines on Charging for Police Services’, National Police Chiefs’ Council, 2020

<https://www.npcc.police.uk/charging%20website.pdf>

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