

	Minutes: 1:1 PCC John Tizard & CC Trevor Rodenhurst
Date	Monday 21 st October 2024
Time	1130-1230
Venue	T/CC Vajzovic's Office, HQ
Name	Position
Dan Vajzovic (DV)	Temporary Chief Constable
John Tizard (JT)	Police and Crime Commissioner
Suzy Collings	PA Support (Minutes)

Open Session

1. Welcome

JT opened the meeting. He asked how DV was finding the T/CC role and thanked him for stepping up into the role and for keeping him informed of significant issues as they arose.

2. Police Race Action Plan (PRAP)

DV had attended the National Black Police Association Conference last week. At the Conference, the Chair of the Black Police Association re-iterated his concerns that the PRAP was not making sufficient progress and there is ongoing discussion about this taking place within the National Police Chiefs' Council. DV explained that, from a Bedfordshire Perspective, we have made a commitment to Abi Johnson, and others who oversee the PRAP, that we would place dedicated resource into taking this forward. Additional resources are being led by Kimberley Campbell-Lamb, Strategic Lead for Improving Policing for Black People in Bedfordshire, to take this forward.

Bedfordshire Police have also responded to a national survey indicating a desire to continue to commit funding as part of a national effort to support the national team. Some progress has been made with our communities but there is still more to be achieved. The level of disproportionality in respect of stop and search is improving but still needs more work. As part of the Priority Based Budget (PBB) process, the level of resource in our Engagement team is being reviewed.

JT said that The PRA is important and that he would wish to see the necessary resources committed to the PRAP and related programmes and teams across Bedfordshire Police. This is important work and is core to the Police and Crime Plan.

3. 2025/26 Budget

The Priority Based Budget Process (PBB) is being undertaken with DV and JT both fully committed to ensuring we get value for money and use our resources in the most effective way.

At this stage JT does not know what the available resources will be as he is waiting for the Home Office to allocate finance after the Spending Review and to set out the government's position on precept capping.

JT said that as PCC he wishes to receive a budget proposal from the Police Service which assumes a net standstill position. JT would expect a risk analysis to accompany this budget proposal as he understands the pressures across the Police Service. He would wish to understand significant proposed changes (plus or minus) to specific elements of the proposed budget,

He would then expect the CC to submit proposals for him to consider for net additional expenditure underpinned by business cases

JT asked that the overall budget should reflect the Police and Crime Plan.

DV confirmed that it remains the case that our performance is good in a number of our teams but we are significantly supported by non-core grant funding. DV asked JT to continue to make the case to for the government a more reasonable long term grant settlement or provide reassurances that the exceptional grants we have are protected in some way. JT confirmed that he is absolutely committed to this and has had a commitment from the Policing Minister him and the CC to discuss funding. He is making the case that the exceptional grants are rolled into an enhanced overall core funding grant and in the longer term for a review and reform of the national police funding formula.

4. T/CC Operational Update and Op Costello

DV reported that the jury in the Martyn Blake trial were now considering its position. Policing is preparing for eventualities depending on the outcome of the case and the impact this will have on operational policing. A decision is expected later this week.

There were two stabbings in Marsh Farm over the weekend. The working hypothesis is that these are in respect of gang related activity, with no wider threat to the community. A Section 60 order was put in place in response to this (which allows officers to stop and search anyone in a specific area without needing reasonable grounds), to prevent further incidents of serious disorder and investigation is ongoing. JT asked what was being done to communicate this to the community including councillors. There has been a press release and local community engagement (including community leaders) in relation to this whilst still working to identify those involved but JT said that he would expect direct communications with key stakeholders and community leaders not least to provide reassurance.

There was a previous episode of 24 Hours in Police Custody involving Carson Grimes. He was sexually grooming children and his case received a lot of media coverage and public approbation. He has been additionally charged with further child abuse offences in the last few days.

DV provided JT with a photo book which was a depiction of an ERSOU (Eastern Region Special Operations Unit) operation, dated 26th September, when enforcement action was carried out

following an investigation into an organised crime group that was laundering money. This was a positive way of demonstrating how our economic crime team chase the money involved around criminality. This case remains sub judice but DV committed to ensuring that if the case was appropriate at the point of conclusion there would be some media releases to highlight that crime does not pay. JT expressed his thanks to the officers involved. ERSOU ACC Adam Ball has sent out a set of results to all forces in the East of England, showing proceeds of crime offences where money has been seized or constrained. This report will also be presented at the OPCC Performance and Governance Board meeting where JT will question ACC Adam Ball on RSOU's performance and in particular its impact on Bedfordshire.

Op Costello work has now secured 500 years worth of sentences. OP Costello is Bedfordshire Polices approach to the National Crime Agencies operation which centres around the infiltration of Encrochat - the criminally dedicated secure communications platform. JT recognised this was a major achievement and demonstrates the importance of the work of the team and the importance of the funding received from the Home Office. He said that he had asked the Det, Chief Superintendent to pass on his congratulations and thanks to the officers involved with Operation Costello. Bedfordshire is safer because of their professional work and achievements.

DV provided an update to JT on the recent explosion and critical incident at Cleat Hill, Bedford. JT asked that the officers and police staff involved over the weekend and since are thanked for their involvement to secure public safety. He was reassured to learn that there had been effective partnership working between the police, fire and rescue, local authority and the HSE.

5. Monkswood

DV wished to provide an update on the specialist BCH training facility at Monkswood. This facility requires urgent and significant investment to ensure that the tri-police services have appropriate public order and other training facilities. Cambridgeshire PCC is responsible for this development but JT and the Hertfordshire PCC have provided a letter of comfort to their Cambridgeshire colleague to enable him to feel that he can proceed with the investment.

6. RTC 17/10

There was a road traffic collision with an unmarked police car last week on the A421. The pedestrian involved is improving but remains in hospital in a serious condition. The officer involved is being supported. The public are aware that the car involved was an unmarked police car. So far this has caused no heightened sense for concern. The incident has been referred to the IOPC who are considering the need to investigate further. JT has asked to be kept updated on the condition of the pedestrian, the welfare of the officer and any updates from the IOPC.

7. Bedford Town Centre and wider concerns about retail crime and ASB

JT reported that there were concerns especially from local retail businesses and residents that Bedford Town Centre is subject to significant anti-social behaviour, shop lifting and retail crime. He has met some of the businesses owners and managers, Borough Council politicians and officers, and Bedfordshire Police community officers to discuss the issues. The police have increased patrols but there is still a perception that more is required.

It was expected that the situation should improve when the police hub opens at the bus station but there is a view from the Borough Council that there are insufficient officers in the town centre.

JT has spoken with Mayor Tom Wootton and the Deputy Mayor Cllr Jim Weir to discuss what might be done in partnership between the police and the council. The Mayor is willing to consider funding some additional PCSOs for the town centre.

DV and JT in principle support this offer but there will need to be some further discussions with the council about the conditions for any agreement for the timing, DV will ask senior officers to speak with the Council CEO and also to explore with her the possibility of the council employing additional enforcement officers who could be delegated powers by the Chief Constable.

JT reported that he had meet retail businesses across the county and there is a consistent concern about shoplifting and related crime.

This forms a core element of the Police and Crime Plan and in particular the local policing missions. He intends to set up an advisory group comprising the police, retail businesses, local authorities and USDAW.

At future Performance and Governance Board meetings he will be reviewing police performance on this issue and the implementation of the Retail Action Plan.

It had also been noted by retailers that some of the shoplifters involved were regular, recognised offenders. DV explained that quite often, the resolution for a shop lifting offence would be a fine. The consequences of this were that the offender then had a debt, with little means of paying it off. DV agrees there is still more to be done. JT asked how this message could be conveyed and what is being said to shopkeepers about this needing to be a partnership approach. Retailers need to ensure they are doing their best to prevent the crime happening in the first instance, report it on the occasions when it does happen, with Police responding positively to this. The criminal justice system also needs to respond in an effective manner having had the police investigation passed to it.

DV and JT agreed that shoplifting/retail crime is a persistent national issue which needs a system wide approach. There needs to be a decent dis-incentive to people who would otherwise commit crime, they also need to be prevented from doing so by shops having appropriate security and taking action to prevent crimes. They must report crimes every time they occur. There is also a case for a review of sentencing especially for persistent offenders. JT will discuss this with local partners and the government.

8. Police and Crime Plan Implementation

Sharn Basra is now in post as Chief Executive in the OPCC

The mission boards will be set up over the next few weeks to drive the Plan forward. DV reported the police nominee leads as follows:

Prevention – T/Supt Alex House

Tackling Serious Crime – Detective Supt Dani Bailey

Tackling VAWG – Detective Supt Emma Pitts

Putting Victims at the Centre – Detective Supt Trevor Davidson
Local Policing – Chief Superintendent Jaki Whittred
Excellence in Policing – ACO Phil Wells and ACC John Murphy
Excellence in Criminal Justice – ACC John Murphy

JT said that he is very much looking forward to working with them, other officers and other partners.

Below is a link to the National Plan that Bedfordshire Police are working to in regards to tackling retail crime:

<https://nbcc.police.uk/business-support/retail-crime-action-plan>