



## Minutes: 1:1 PCC John Tizard & CC Trevor Rodenhurst

<b>Date</b>	Tuesday 28 January 2025
<b>Time</b>	1100 - 1200
<b>Venue</b>	PCC Office, HQ
<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
Trevor Rodenhurst (TR)	Chief Constable
John Tizard (JT)	Police and Crime Commissioner
Lara Lewis	Staff Officer (PCC)

Open Session

### 1. Welcome

### 2. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services Report

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) highlighted the work of the force with Amazon Web Services to utilise technology and artificial intelligence in investigating crime and keeping people safe.

The inspectorate also commended work being done to reach young people to prevent knife crime particularly with communities in Luton, and significant improvements to its performance answering 999 and 101 calls.

The findings were part of the HMICFRS PEEL report which measures Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy inspection (PEEL).

Bedfordshire Police assessed as Good in recording crime, adequate across seven areas and Requiring Improvement in investigating crime. The force was previously assessed as Good at tackling serious and organised crime following another recent inspection.

Alongside innovation, HMICFRS also praised the force for:

- Its approach to tackling Male Violence Against Women and Girls – including an increase in Clare's Law referrals (up to 251 from 73 'right to know' applications).
- Work engaging young people about knife crime which has seen workshops delivered to more than 300 people and messaging reaching a further 79,000 through social media

advertising.

- Improvements in its Force Control Room answering 999 and 101 calls.
- Increased use of Sexual Risk Orders and Sexual Harm Prevention Orders (increasing from 55 to 104).

The CC said that this report makes clear that Bedfordshire is a well-led force which is on the front foot despite our financial challenges. Those challenges are documented in the report, showing our funding is at the lower end of police forces across England and Wales, despite facing the same demand of incidents and calls.

It also highlights the brilliant work being carried out and the police service continue to invest in their wellbeing and development.

The report recognises the positive work being carried out in Bedfordshire including the focus on innovation, prevention work around knife crime and the improvements in 999 response performance with calls now answered within an average of just five seconds.

Since the inspection Bedfordshire Police has already made good progress against the areas identified for improvement – such as increasing solved rates, retaining and training more detectives, and introducing new dashboards to rank our outstanding suspects in order of threat and risk.

The PCC said he welcomes the report, and as an enthusiast for objective external inspections of all public services including policing, HMICFRS have found nothing that is a surprise to either him or the Chief Constable and that are not being addressed already. This inspection focused on plans and activities already in place before John Tizard was elected in May 2024.

Although the report refers to some plans and activities in place when he was elected last May, its findings are aligned with the issues and challenges he had already identified for improvement.

He recognises that there is much work underway to improve performance and is confident that the Chief Constable has the plans and the drive for continuous performance.

He said he is the joint national lead for performance for the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners so has seen all reports which have been thus far published so he understands the wider context of the inspection regime and is satisfied that Bedfordshire is in a good place to make sustainable improvements.

The PCC concurs with HMICFRS that Bedfordshire Police is well led, and senior leaders have the support of officers and staff, and that these conditions are central for the improvements which are now required.

The PCC will require the CC to:

- develop an action plan for addressing the findings in the PEEL report

- report on progress at Performance and Governance Board on a quarterly basis where the PCC will scrutinise progress

CC responded with the fact that he has know of recommendations for some time and plans have already been developed and acted. He will ensure progress is reported into Performance and Governance Board.

### **3. Child Sexual Exploitation – Review of Cases**

PCC asked for an update on Bedfordshire Police's position.

CC reported that there has been a review of historic cases and he has no reason to believe that there are any outstanding cases. There is an operational team dedicated to CSE which focuses on ensuring the safeguarding of all individuals.

PCC requested a further update on the review of historic cases and on contemporary performance.

PCC is keen to explore how collaborative working with partners and other stakeholders could drive prevention and detection rates, as well as support to victims. He asked for this to be included on a future Performance and Governance Board spotlight agenda.

### **4. Prevent – Counter terrorism programme**

PCC recognises the important work carried out by the Prevent team and the successful disruption of activity. He acknowledged that this team depends on partnership working with schools and other agencies. He said that everyone has a responsibility to report any suspected activity.

He sought assurance that the Prevent programme is operating effectively. He had had an opportunity to scrutinise this performance at the Performance and Governance Board the previous day.

CC noted that the programme is being reviewed at a regional level and that Bedfordshire Police work cooperatively with others.

The PCC sought reassurance that in light to the recent Southport case and the government review of the Prevent programme that Bedfordshire Police and ERSOU would be ready to respond to any changes that the Home Office introduces.

### **5. Artificial Intelligence at Bedfordshire Police and ERSOU**

CC is working with team to continuously seek areas that could benefit from the expansion of AI in the police service. The platform used by several teams so far, called Nectar (the Palantir Foundry platform) is working well and is driving productivity.

The PCC said that he is supportive of more investment in AI and technological solutions to drive performance and productivity.

He noted that the policing minister had expressed to him how she had been impressed by the presentation of Bedfordshire and ERSOU's use of technology including AI when she visited the Bedfordshire on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

CC updated that the police service has recently rolled out AI to be used for Clare's Law to improve productivity and recognise potential harm in areas of domestic abuse. CC is hoping to also roll this out to tackle burglary and robbery in identify known offenders.

## **6. Operational Update**

CC updated that suspects believed to be associated with all four of the homicides that sadly occurred in January have now resulted in suspects being charged and remanded.

PCC noted that all four incidents were very different in nature and that Bedfordshire Police had responded to all very rapidly with quick arrests made.

PCC said that it was important that communications were deployed to provide reassurance to the residents of Bedfordshire and that the police were addressing serious crime including homicide effectively. He said that public perception of crime had to be addressed and that simply stating statistical evidence is insufficient. He intends to address this through the Excellence and Victims mission boards.

CC updated that there have been several arrests and a number of seizures of firearms in relation to a separate operation in Luton which is aimed at tackling the criminal use of firearms.

## **7. Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee**

PCC re-emphasised his and the government's expectations that following the allocation of Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee funding by the Home Office Bedfordshire Police will increase the number of officers and PCSOs in local policing.

CC is supportive and shares the ambition. Following receipt from government of terms and conditions for this funding an assessment of what this enables will be made.

The PCC and CC agreed that local policing is important but that it would not be prudent to increase officer numbers at the expense of other critical areas of policing.

The PCC stressed that his mission to reinvigorate local policing is about changing culture, behaviours and relationships not simply about more officers.

PCC wants to improve communication about what policing is available in any one area at any one time. For example, the rural community benefit from a team who responds to emergencies, a dedicated community policing team, a dedicated Rural Crime Action Team to

tackle specific rural crimes, as well as the range of investigative and proactive teams that work across the county tackling serious crime.

CC is in agreement. There are lots of rural crimes related to organised crime groups and we are working locally and regionally to target offenders and disrupt activity

It was agreed to review communications.

#### **8. Responding to the Public – Patrol Function**

PCC requested an update on how the Patrol function are being assessed, trained and improved in line with the needs of the public. Patrol team carries a significant caseload as well as being required to attend emergencies within fifteen minutes everywhere in the county. PCC asked if, by Patrol team carrying an investigation workload, whether this was detrimental to response times.

CC noted that 'Responding to the public' was graded as 'adequate' in the recent inspection report by HMICFRS. CC said that Patrol is a critical part of the wider police service and that his policing model was built on patrol carrying a workload. The intention is to get the basics right, answer calls quickly, get to the public quickly, and once there stay there and do a good initial response whether that's arrests, securing evidence or safeguarding victims.

The current Leadership team is focused on making improvements in this area. Major improvements in other areas such as answering calls in the Control Room and addressing investigative capacity (since the HMICFRS report) have been made. Training is underway to equip more officers to be patrol drivers and improve their investigation performance.

CC said that improved solved rates have been achieved by some teams that are performing better than others, and the current leadership focus is to drive consistency in this area.

PCC agreed, he has met some impressive leaders who carry out effective debriefs and demonstrate good teamwork, but he still has concern about the lack of resources and overall response times. He emphasised a need for a culture where everyone is a leader and is willing to take decisions.

#### **9. AOB**

PCC will be attending Bedfordshire Police's 'Dragons Den' event this week, where the workforce brings forward suggestions on ways to streamline work and improve productivity.

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