

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE
PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE BOARD
Monday 27 January 2025

Present:
John Tizard, Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
Trevor Rodenhurst, Chief Constable – Police Service (CC)
In Attendance:
Phil Wells, Chief Finance Officer – Police Service/OPCC (PW)
Dan Vajzovic, Deputy Chief Constable – Police Service (DV)
John Murphy, Assistant Chief Constable – Police Service (JM)
Adam Ball, Assistant Chief Constable – Eastern Regional Special Operations Unit (AB)
Ian Simmons, Detective Chief Superintendent – Joint Protective Services (IS)
Sharn Basra, Chief Executive – OPCC (SB)
Lara Lewis, Staff Officer – PCC (LL)
Emma Punter, Staff Officer (EP)
Katie Beaumont, Head of Governance and Transparency (KB)

Agenda Item	
Item 1: Welcome Minutes of meeting held and for agreement and matters arising	PCC welcomed everyone to meeting. Apologies from ACC Karena Thomas. Minutes from previous meeting were agreed.
Item 2 Action Log	Outstanding actions from previous meeting were agreed as completed.
Information document	Information document agreed as ready for publication. PCC noted that future documents will be more aligned to the police and crime plan missions, keeping those that are a statutory requirement.
Victim satisfaction survey	PCC noted the new victim satisfaction survey is now live.

	<p>PCC raised questions regarding victim satisfaction and asked about progress in understanding victim dissatisfaction.</p> <p>JM - The service has introduced a new victim satisfaction survey and has a dedicated Inspector leading the area of work.</p> <p>PCC asks what feedback is being received about the service victims receive, and what the data is being used for?</p> <p>JM – Dedicated teams are pushing the use of the feedback survey. There will be a report presented on this next month. There is some dissatisfaction with the Patrol function, where there is a focus on upskilling officers and training first line leaders, recognising that there is a lot of demand carried by this function.</p> <p>It was agreed progress will be subject to a spotlight feature in February under the Victims Mission.</p>
<p>Item 4</p> <p>Scheme of Governance</p>	<p>Revised scheme of governance was presented. The only significant change being that the PCC can delegate responsibility for dealing with Pension Forfeiture cases (stage 1) to OPCC CEO. CEO will declare any conflicts of interest.</p> <p>The scheme was agreed, and an action was taken for the Scheme of Governance to be published on OPCC Website.</p>
<p>Item 5</p> <p>3.1 Bedfordshire Police crime performance</p> <p>- Local (Bedfordshire)</p> <p>- Customer Support Report</p>	<p>JM presented report on Bedfordshire Police performance, covering highlights from Patrol and responding to the public, robbery and burglary, serious violence and homicide, and intelligence.</p> <p>He highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 90% of 999 calls are answered in the Force Control Room within 10 seconds. • The average wait time for a response to 101 calls is under 4 minutes, with priority 101 calls being answered within 1 minute 45 seconds. • Recorded crime for shoplifting, rape and serious sexual offences has increased. These are all crimes that the police have actively been encouraging the public to report on so this is a positive. • The long-term trend for overall solved crime rate is showing a slow upwards trajectory which is better than short sharp spikes that are not sustainable. • Outstanding suspects - decrease of 105 in December and have introduced a new which has gone live this week with expected good results. Have now got past big spike seen in the summer months. • Bedfordshire Police is driving down response times to attend robberies, and a Detective Seargent now reviews all files to ensure no opportunities are being missed. • There was a 20% reduction in recorded residential burglaries this quarter compared to the previous year. This year there was no seasonal spike due to a combination of factors, including prevention work and work on prolific offenders.

- In 2024 Bedfordshire Police recorded 2 more homicides than in 2023, but equal to number in 2022. Would not currently be considered an outlier nationally. There were reductions in both the severity and volume of knife crime incidents towards the end of last year.
- Bedfordshire Police is one of the leading forces for disruptions, seizing drugs and safeguarding children and adults.

PCC thanked JM for the report and asked how Bedfordshire Police are seeking to improve public understanding of the improvements in response times to 101 calls, to encourage the public to utilise this service further.

The PCC commented that he is still told about long waiting times in answering 101, which dissuades the public from using this facility and that this should be communicated better with the public.

The CC understands the need to tackle this as 101 is now much more effective. The average time to arrive at immediate graded incidents remains at around 12 minutes. However efforts to drive up consistency of response times will take time due to the number of drivers in the workforce, amongst other factors.

The PCC reported his concerns regarding the caseload of the RASSO Team following a meeting with them.

JM confirmed there has been an increase in victims reporting multiple offences.

PCC asked if the Patrol function is experiencing an effective rotation of training and turnover?

CC – Trend shows there will be increased driver numbers with a forecast for a steady growth in capacity overtime. Slow progress but moving in right direction.

PCC asked if the Chief Constable is confident that the trajectory for solved crime rate is likely to continue upwards.

CC – There is still improvement to be made in some areas, so it is difficult to say. Benchmarking data recording against other forces to ensure it is being calculated consistently. Resources are stretched but making investments in innovation to increase productivity.

PCC asked if there are plans to extend the remit of the dedicated burglary unit – Operation Maze - to include robberies?

CC - this is something that has been looked at however robbery is core business for the CID and frontline responders. There is considerable scrutiny at the moment on our response to personal robbery.

PCC asked if there is anything OPCC might be able to assist with in terms of prevention of burglaries and robberies?

CC – Bedfordshire Police are currently recording roughly one offence per day, but these differ in location and items stolen. Bedfordshire Police remain completely focussed on driving this down, as one a day is too many. Many offences are related to drugs, and highlighted that he had invested in a drugs focus desk to enhance the response to arrested for drugs trafficking offences.

PCC asked how it is being communicated to the public that Bedfordshire is safe, despite the serious incidents in January.

CC – 2 of the 4 homicides that occurred in January were very sad and rare circumstances that could arguably have occurred in any location. We are looking at how to better monitor signs and patterns. Stakeholders and partners are highly supportive of our work, and this is demonstrated by the PCC's mission boards. They are aware that police are doubling our efforts in Bedford town centre for example.

PCC noted that Patrol caseloads have decreased, the solved crime rate has also declined but response times have not improved. He asked when CC thinks this will improve.

CC – More work is being done to make improvements and this will be reported at a future meeting of the board. However, this is not an overnight fix as ultimately is about building experience and capacity.

PCC observed the north of the county is more effective in managing caseload.

CC – There is less complex demand so more time to investigate, and some teams are performing better than others with the same resource hence our focus on leadership as this will drive performance and consistency. Now looking at this to get a consistent performance.

PCC asked if the newly available data with regards to disparity is being used effectively.

CC – There is disparity evident in most crime types recorded and work is being undertaken lead by of Director for Legitimacy with other stakeholders, to understand the true picture of disparity in the system. The intention is to eliminate, reduce or explain all areas of disparity.

It was agreed that this would be returned to for further discussion as part of the Spotlight report on Excellence. PCC added that many partners attended the Prevention mission board, and they have collected data around deprivation in Bedfordshire.

	<p>PCC noted customer support report.</p> <p>A further report on the performance of the Patrol team was requested for presentation at the Spotlight Board for local policing.</p>
<p>Item 4</p> <p>4.1 Risk (Change in risk OPCC and Force)</p>	<p>The Joint Audit Committee completed a full review of risk registers last month and were satisfied with them.</p>
<p>Item 5</p> <p>5.1 Collaboration updates</p> <p><i>Joint Protective Services (JPS) Update</i></p>	<p>IS presented report on Joint Protective Services, covering highlights including armed policing, roads policing, dog unit, major crime and others.</p> <p>He highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bedfordshire has more presence from armed policing unit out of the three policing areas. • The roads policing unit carried out over 3500 drink-drive stops over Christmas period. • There are currently 51 police vehicles off the road. • There is a delay in being able to get fully licensed and accredited dogs into the dog unit, as well as a continued concern around kennelling dangerous dogs and the drain on funding this incurs. This is a national issue, and funding is being made available gradually. So far Bedfordshire Police have spent £73k on kennelling dangerous dogs. • Major Crime Unit have had positive court results and are exceptionally busy in Bedfordshire in terms of live work and trials. Absolute peak of demand but 95% detection rate in terms of homicide and 87% for all crimes. 92% conviction rate for homicide and 91% for all crime. <p>PCC thanked IS for the detailed report and asked why there are so many vehicles off the road in the roads policing unit? Is the specification of vehicle required becoming detrimental to the effectiveness of the service?</p> <p>CC – there needs to be a national conversation on the police requirement on the specification and procurement of vehicles. Police driver behaviour is improving with fewer avoidable collisions. But sometimes they have to use vehicle tactical contact options to protect the public. Vehicles are becoming more advanced with more technology but this means that when they are damaged the repairs take longer and cost more. There is an ongoing review of the BCH fleet requirements.</p> <p>PCC asked why the attendance by the Dog Unit was low in 2024/25.</p> <p>CC – This is due to having fewer dogs deployable over the course of the previous year, for the reasons outlined in the report.</p>

	<p>PCC asked how close Major Crime Unit's workload is to reaching capacity? What are the possible implications on Bedfordshire Police?</p> <p>CC – Bedfordshire is the lead force for MCU and this is monitored very carefully and closely. The MCU are stretched due to recent demand on this capability across the 3 forces and at the moment due to these pressures in the event of new cases in the near future the 3 forces may have to support MCU with local resources. There are regular honest conversations and flexibility across the three forces.</p>
<p><i>Eastern Region Serious Organised Crime (ERSOU) update</i></p>	<p>AB presented report on performance in the Eastern Regional Special Operations Unit, following on from the executive update given at the ERSOU board in December which the PCC attended.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great working relationship with Bedfordshire teams continues, working together to tackle serious organised crime and organised crime group networks. • The volume of disruptions at the end of last year tripled with impressive results. 54 major disruptions in Bedfordshire. • Lots of prevention work ongoing including in Clear, Hold, Build sites where partnership working is ongoing. • Currently 26 live operations in the Regional Organised Crime Unit in Bedfordshire. • Operation Cyclone - Over 100 firearms recovered. Longest ever sentence - 30 years 6 months and entire OCG got over 70 years. National communication piece • Financial Investigator secured 132k cash forfeiture in one operation. • Op Topaz - Class A OCG convicted 18 months ago secured cash forfeiture • Op Recursive - 7 guilty with sentencing in February for supply of Class A drugs • Op Lioness - 6 years 9 months for supply class A <p>PCC thanked AB for report. The work done to disrupt is really impressive and the relationship is clearly working well between Bedfordshire Police and ERSOU.</p> <p>PCC said he would like to have a further discussion at the board about Prevent when the outcome of the government's review is available.</p> <p>AB - ERSOU are working both regionally and nationally to share updates and work collectively, and are well positioned to be able to respond at pace to be able to respond to the centre. The DCC will be tasking each police service to review repeat referrals in light of Southport learning.</p> <p>DCC - Now seeing a number of these cases having an absence of ideology.</p>

<p>Item 6</p> <p>6.1 Chief Constable Complaints</p> <p>6.2 Reviews</p>	<p>No Chief Constable complaints to report.</p> <p>Nothing to report relating to reviews.</p>
<p>Item 7</p> <p>Quarterly Reporting Efficiency</p> <p>7.1 Budget / Efficiency</p>	<p>The PCC thanked the Chief Finance Officer, the Chief Constable and all staff that had made the work on the budget possible. He further referred to the importance of the Priority Based Budgeting process.</p> <p>PCC has had opportunities to discuss the budget with both the Chief Constable and Chief Finance Officer at length.</p> <p>PW presented the proposed revenue budget for 2025/26.</p> <p>PCC approved the budget and will be recommending a precept increase of £14 for Band D to the Police and Crime Panel on 4 February 2025.</p> <p>PCC said his expectation would be that the £930k allocated by the Home Office would result in an increase in police officers and PCSOs in the local community policing teams.</p> <p>CC said he awaits clarification of the terms and conditions associated with this grant to be in a position to determine how to use the grant and allocate resources.</p> <p>The PCC observed that it was not about police numbers alone and about activity.</p> <p>PCC asked for formal assurance that a reduction in overall staff establishment numbers through the Priority Based Budgeting process will not diminish the ability to deliver an effective service.</p> <p>CC – The process ensures that there will be the most minimal impact on service.</p> <p>PCC is also reassured from other conversations with the Chief.</p> <p>PCC asked if, in the medium term, the CC and ACO are comfortable that a prudent use of reserves is being taken?</p> <p>PW- confident in approach for 25/26, but need to cut back some expenditure for this current year to eliminate the need to use further reserves. But confident that further reviews of BCH/ERSOU budgets that are being undertaken over the next few months, will result in a reduced requirement to use reserves for 2026/27.</p>

	<p>PCC asked if overtime spend will be reviewed.</p> <p>CC – There are many reasons to use overtime such as specific operation surges, scene guards, and sometimes the time taken to provide cases to CPS when decisions are needed whilst prisoners are in custody. There will always be a need for some use of overtime, but leadership oversight is key to making the best use of this and this will be a focus for leaders this coming year.</p> <p>CC - Incredible amount of work gone into PBB to put Bedfordshire Police in a good position considering the difficulties faced by funding.</p> <p>PCC thanks the CFO and CC for the work carried out on the budgeting process, confirms he approves budget and notes the report on the capital programme.</p>
Item 8 PEEL report by HMICFRS	The PCC requested that the CC bring forward a report on a quarterly basis to the Board on his plans for addressing the findings in the HMICFRS report.
Item 9 Capital programme	PW presented the report which was noted
Item 10 Treasury management	PW presented the report which was noted
AOB	None.

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