

STRATEGIC SCRUTINY MEETING

THURSDAY 5th JANUARY 2.30PM IN ROOM AO6, COUNTY HALL, PRESTON

NOTE

PRESENT

Clive Grunshaw - Police and Crime Commissioner
Steve Finnigan - Chief Constable, Lancashire Constabulary

IN ATTENDANCE

Ian Cosh – Director of Resources
Chief Superintendent Pete Lawson – Lancashire Constabulary
Superintendent Neil Ashton - Lancashire Constabulary
Superintendent Sam Mackenzie – Lancashire Constabulary
Angela Harrison – Director, OPCC
Ian Dickinson - Governance and Policing Lead, OPCC
Jane Pearson – Project Support officer, OPCC

1 NOTE AND ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING

The Police and Crime Commissioner was pleased to note that all the actions identified at the last meeting had been completed and no actions were outstanding.

2 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Chief Constable presented a report on performance figures in respect of crime reduction and detection rates, with particular reference to an overview of performance; the priorities contained within the Police and Crime Plan; and finance and resources.

Protecting Local Policing

The Chief Constable informed the Commissioner that 60 new police officers were recruited in October 2016 – 40 went in to Early Action and 20 in Immediate Response. On 27th January 2017, another 40 officers will be recruited.

In relation to PCSOs the Chief Constable advised the Commissioner that the establishment figures were starting to become clearer, however a number of local authorities were yet to advise the Constabulary in relation to their position on funding of PCSOs for 2017/18.

The Commissioner asked the Chief Constable how many Special Constables he believed that the current budget and structure allowed. In response the Chief Constable advised the Commissioner that he believed 650 was a realistic target as the cost was restricted in the main to uniform and training.

Tackling Crime & Reoffending

The Chief Constable advised that there had been an increase in the 'In Year Performance' versus the 'Previous 12 Month Period' of 10,320 crimes (11.1%).

Whilst Lancashire had seen an increase in all crime the Chief Constable believed that the Constabulary had performed strongly when compared to an increase of 6.9% across the region and an increase of 14.8% within the most similar group. It was noted that 39 forces had recorded an increase in crime. The current forecast for 2016/17 was an increase of 11.4%.

Supporting Victims & Vulnerable People

The Chief Constable stated that demand had changed over the years with the number of 'recent' cases reducing and 'historic' cases increasing. Also, it was noted that following the recent Hate Crime Awareness campaign, the number of incidents had increased – which demonstrated that people were confident about reporting.

Developing Safe & Confident Communities

The Commissioner was advised that the latest data from the Crime Statistics of England and Wales showed that both the percentage of people who have confidence in the police and who think the police do a good job had increased locally. This means Lancashire, with a confidence level of 80.9%, was now ranked 16th nationally for public confidence. This survey was based on a sample size of 575

In comparison the Constabulary's 'in house' survey based on a sample size of 50 stood at 84.5% which highlighted the inconsistency in the approach to undertaking such surveys.

The Commissioner noted that discussions were underway nationally to discontinue the user satisfaction categories and replace it with a requirement that will enable the Constabulary to seek insights from service users with an expectation that they will be able to demonstrate how these insights are used to improve policy, practice or performance.

With this in mind it was agreed that there was an opportunity for the Constabulary to discuss with the OPCC which areas they would wish to see surveyed in the future when Home Office Guidance was received.

3 CONTACT MANAGEMENT

The Commissioner received a report setting out the latest performance of the Force Control Room (FCR) and outlining the approach being taken by Lancashire Constabulary to tackle performance issues.

The Chief Constable informed the Commissioner that the FCR was currently understrength with 280 Police Communications Response Officers (PCROs). However, as from 23rd January 2017, there would be an additional 40 permanent staff appointed in the FCR (subject to vetting) with a further 10-15 people will also be recruited in March/April. This would move the FCR from an understrength position to an over strength position.

The Commissioner enquired about alternative methods of reporting and asked if a message or call backs could be an option to help reduce the number of calls. In response the Chief Constable advised the Commissioner that this was not possible at this time due to the system the PCROs use. However, the Constabulary was

currently procuring a new telephony system which would be in use by the end of 2017, which would allow enable a more extensive system including improved functionality to assist the public i.e., press1 for a call back etc.

The Commissioner commented that if the Constabulary was trying to reduce the calls by signposting the public to other ways of reporting, i.e., online, they needed to ensure that someone answers all online reports and the system is efficient and effective.

The Commissioner was informed that there would also be an Analyst appointed at the end of January 2017 to look at the current processes in this area and to ensure an efficient and effective use of resources.

The Commissioner was informed that around half of all 999 calls received in the Constabulary control room were not true emergencies. Therefore, over the Christmas period, the Constabulary undertook an awareness campaign around the number of calls and types of calls the FCR received. This campaign would continue throughout the year.

In response to a question from the Commissioner in relation to the effectiveness of the Initial Investigation Unit (IIU), the Chief Constable advised that a review of the IIU, introduced to deal with grade 3 and 4 incidents, was now underway. It was anticipated this review would result in a change in the shift rota to deal with demand and would be implemented on 1st April 2017.

The Commissioner was also advised that over the course of the next 2 years the room was expected to upgrade systems to be ready for the national Airwave replacement; ESN (Emergency Service Network). The department had begun to host demonstrations from suppliers of integrated control room systems to understand what products were available on the market and as a pre-cursor to establishing a formal landscape review of the systems and with a view to longer term upgrade or replacement with a highly stable and function rich integrated solution.

The Commissioner stated that his office was currently undertaking a telephone survey regarding the precept, and that one of the questions being asked was around the public's confidence in the police. The results of this would be fed back at local level.

Finally, the Commissioner expressed his concern that Lancashire Constabulary had seen an increase in instances where an ambulance was unavailable so police officers have transported persons to hospital. The Director of Resources provided assurances that the Constabulary was engaged with NWS to manage this activity and he agreed to contact the Chief Executive of the Ambulance Service to discuss the current position.

ACTION – That the Governance & Policing Lead for the OPCC and Head of Contact Management meet to prepare a report outlining the approach being taken by Lancashire Constabulary to tackle performance issues in the Force Control Room for the next scheduled meeting of the Police and Crime Panel.

ACTION – That the Director of Resources speaks to the NWAS Chief Executive in relation to the increasing use of police vehicles to transport people to hospital in order to identify any possible solutions.

4 HMIC REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commissioner received a report providing an update in respect of the Constabulary's progress against outstanding HMIC recommendations.

The Commissioner stated that he was disappointed with the progress made against a number of outstanding HMIC recommendations. The Chief Constable agreed that this area needed to be improved and better presented. It was agreed that the Superintendent (Corporate Development) update the position.

5 CUSTODY UPDATE

The Commissioner welcomed a report in relation to the recent HMIP / HMIC Custody Inspection 2016 and the associated Action Plan.

The Commissioner enquired as to the cost of the CCTV and the plans for Burnley custody. The Chief Constable confirmed that initial planned essential health and safety work had caused the suite to be shut and recent sickness absences had extended the closure. The Director of Resources would write separately to the commissioner outlining the costs of works at Burnley. However, the Director of Resources confirmed that the CCTV equipment was portable and could be reused elsewhere in custody thereby ensuring value for money.

In the meantime, whilst no long term decision had been made with regards to custody at Burnley it would be required to enable the phased closure of custody at both Preston and Blackburn in the near future to facilitate the installation of CCTV.

ACTION – Director of Resources to advise the Commissioner in relation to the cost of installing CCTV in the custody suites.

6 RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

The Commissioner received a report on the utilisation of Restorative Justice in the force area at the current time.

In noting the report the Commissioner asked for sight of the Action Plan referred to in the report at the earliest opportunity.

The Chief Constable informed the Commissioner that the funding he had provided in this area was coming to an end, however, whilst they would be putting in further bids to retain the post it was suggested that if the intention was to retain the posts on a permanent basis then consideration should be given to building the posts into the establishment.

The Commissioner stated that he had recently been to a High School in Burnley and that the children had done a lot of work and awareness around restorative justice. The Commissioner stated that with regard to Early Action, the progress was excellent, however he stated that Restorative Justice needs to be used early and not as a last resort.

ACTION – The Chief Constable to present the completed Action Plan to a future meeting.

7 CONSTABULARY INFORMATION GOVERNANCE

The Commissioner received a report on the Constabulary's performance and progress in relation to information governance in 2015/16.

The Chief Constable informed the Commissioner that the majority of misconduct hearings that he presides over were due to the misuse of information and more work was required to educate and inform staff in relation to the importance of data protection.

8 PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS – PUBLIC COMPLAINTS, TIMELINESS AND APPEALS

The Commissioner received a report in relation to the handling and timeliness of complaints.

It was noted that the issues relating to the new IT system of recording complaints had now been resolved and there had been an improvement in the time 'recording decisions' of complaints were now made. Further, staff in the Professional Standards Department were being trained in order to resolve more complaints at the first point rather than send them to Division for resolution.

It was noted that over the past two years the number of complaints resolved by way of Local Resolution has reduced from 80% of all resolutions to around 60%. Previously local investigations had been incorporated within the local resolution classification. This was inaccurate and had now been corrected and accounts for the changes. Despite this approach, it was noted that audits had still shown the complaints were receiving appropriate outcomes. This disparity in recording practices was acknowledged by the IPCC and was now monitored in regular performance meetings between the force and the IPCC. The proportion of complaints finalised by way of Local Resolution in Lancashire was now comparable to 4 of the 7 forces within the Most Similar Force Group. Statistical data was routinely monitored and audited to ensure that all complaints were resolved using the most appropriate mechanism.

The Commissioner welcomed the reduction in the time to deal with complaints but suggested that this should be reduced further and asked for a further report be presented to the June meeting to check against progress.

The Commissioner was informed that currently there were 25 Appeals in progress

ACTION – The Commissioner asked that a report be brought to the June meeting in to evidence progress in relation to the timeliness of handling complaints and appeals.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was presented.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next scheduled Strategic Scrutiny meeting will be held on 14th March 2017.

PRIVATE ITEMS

GOVERNANCE ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16

The Commissioner received and noted a report on the OPCCs performance and progress in relation to information governance in 2015/16.

A Harrison
DIRECTOR