

**Meeting: Police Accountability Board**

**Venue: Skype Virtual Meeting**

**Date: 4th of August 2020**

**Time: 10:00 – 13:00**

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| **Members:** | Mr Dafydd Llywelyn, Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)Chief Constable Mark Collins (CC)Deputy Chief Constable Claire Parmenter (DCC)Assistant Chief Constable Emma Ackland (ACC)Mr Edwin Harries, Director of Finance (DoF)Mrs Carys Morgans, Chief of Staff, OPCC (CoS)Mrs Beverley Peatling, Chief Finance Officer (CFO) |
| **Also Present:** | DI Richard Yelland, Staff Officer, DPP (RI)PS Tanya Grey, Staff Officer, DPP (TG)Miss Mair Harries, Executive Support, OPCC (MH) |
| **Observers** | *Members of the Dyfed-Powys Police and Crime Panel:*Cllr Emlyn Schiavone (ES), CarmarthenshireCllr Keith Evans (KE), CeredigionCllr Bob Summons (BS), PembrokeshireCllr Les George (LG), Powys *Members of the Dyfed-Powys Police and Crime Commissioner’s Quality Assurance Panel.*Elisa DaviesChris WheatleyAlan JonesYvonne MillerSusan Homas |
| **Apologies:** | None |

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| ACTION SUMMARY FROM MEETING ON 11/05/2020 |
| Action No | Action Summary | To be progressed by: |
| **PAB 138** | **GI to arrange a conversation between the Commissioner and Youth Forum members for the week commencing the 17th of May to further progress discussions which took place during the Youth Forum’s question time at PAB on May the 11th.** | **Complete** |
| **PAB 139** | **School Liaison officers to consider publishing key messages of support for children on ‘Hwb’ the Welsh Government funded information platform.** | **Complete** |
| **PAB 140** | **The Force to include data on the use of technology in the next performance report for PAB. This will include utilisation of Single Online Home, agile working data and use of skype facilities.** | **Complete** |

**1 - Apologies and Introductions**

The PCC greeted members of the Police and Crime Panel and members of his Quality Assurance Panel to the meeting, noting no apologies from regular members of the Policing Accountability Board.

**2 – Questions from the Quality Assurance Panel**

The CC responded to a question regarding the benefits and drawbacks of using body worn cameras. The CC stated that there were more benefits than drawbacks, and suggested that members of the public sometimes behaved better when they were aware they were being recorded and officers also performed better when they were using the cameras. The CC stated that scrutiny has been placed around the use of the body worn videos including daily checks of incidents where cameras have been used, and incidents where cameras should have been used but the officers involved forgot to turn them on. This could lead to disciplinary action. KE queried whether officers were averse to using the new technology, and was informed that although some officers were reluctant in the beginning, this is no longer the case. The DCC stated that the cameras allow the Force to review incidents where complaints have been made by members of the public against officers , and in some instances the complaint is dismissed as the complaint does not match what occurs in the video. This has made using the technology more attractive to officers as they feel their actions will be supported by the footage. The DCC also stated that several court cases have been able to make victimless prosecutions in cases involving domestic abuse and domestic violence because of the footage captured by officers’ body worn cameras.

The Board responded to further questions regarding lockdown measures in response to Covid-19, and the restriction of movement from England to Wales. The PCC stated that he is engaging with Welsh Government and other Commissioners in Wales to ensure a balance is struck between supporting the local economy and educating tourists coming into Wales about the different restrictions in Wales compared to England. The discussion moved on to instances of hate crime during the lockdown and how the Force responds to them. The CC stated that although the number of hate crime in the Dyfed-Powys force area is low, the Force takes them very seriously. When a hate crime is reported the person making the complaint is put in touch with an officer who will support them during the investigation and be their point of contact. In relation to complaints of hate crime against English travellers during the lockdown period, the CC stated that due to the magnitude of the task of restricting travel from England into the Dyfed-Powys area the Force’s focus was enforcing the Covid-19 regulations as opposed to educating the public. It was noted that the CC had written to all second-home owners in the Dyfed-Powys area at the beginning of lockdown to ask them to respect the travel restrictions. The PCC closed the discussion by stating that he had received feedback that local residents felt very well-supported by the police during the lockdown period.

The discussion moved on to the ongoing activity of the Black Lives Matter campaign with the PCC stating that he and the Force had engaged with representatives to ensure gatherings in the Dyfed-Powys area were peaceful and respectful of safety regulations. It was noted that all gatherings have been peaceful with good engagement with officers. The CC stated that the resident population of Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) of Dyfed-Powys is 2%, and the BAME representation on the Force is 1% currently, however 3 BAME individuals would join the Force in September, and the Force are engaging with the University of Wales Trinity St. David’s on how to support more minority groups who wanted to join the Force. The CC also highlighted his commitment to supporting the Welsh language within the Force and that officers and staff were regularly encouraged and offered courses where they can learn the language.

**3 – Minutes of previous meeting held on the 11th of May**

The Board accepted the minutes as a true and accurate reflection of the minutes, with minor amendments requested by the CFO and KE.

**4 – Force Performance Report Quarter 4**

The PCC commenced the discussion by querying why the response times to incidents had been removed from the report. The PCC stated that it was important to include the data in order to ensure equality and parity of response across the Force. The CC stated that some of the smaller stations including Tenby and Lampeter have increased their opening times to a 24-hour service in order to support the local communities. The PCC stated that whilst the decision to change the opening times of the stations are the CC’s to make, he was pleased with the decision. The CC stated that the Force had done a lot of demand review work in order to understand the demands on officers in different locations. The CC stated that the re-structure of the Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs) in 2019 and their work with Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and other local officers mean that it is now appropriate to make a change to the opening hours of some stations. The CC stated that the increase of options for the public to report crime including electronically and on social media, mean that the previous demand on call handlers and officers can be redistributed and redirected. The ACC stated that the Force need to continue to understand how the most recent decisions will impact demand, and an evaluation review will be conducted to assess this. The PCC stated that in his discussions with Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS) it was felt that the Force’s demand performance was heading in a positive direction.

The discussion moved on to the Force’s recruitment plan and the deployment of resources for the rest of the financial year. The CC stated that the top line figure of officers for this year will be 1180 officers, with three intakes of 22 officers having already taken place this year. It was noted that over the next three years the Force is expected to be allocated 142 officers, meaning that the Force is in a very good position for the future. The DoF stated that a further 24 officers will join the Force in March 2021. The PCC stated that the Force had experienced surges of individuals leaving the Force over the past few years and queried how the Force is reviewing this. The DCC stated that that a number of individuals had left for a variety of reasons including due to seeking a career change and changes to the pension rates. The Force is however working to ensure that their demand plans take leavers into account in order to ensure that officer numbers don’t impact on the Force’s ability to support the public. The DCC also stated that the Force often takes transferees from other forces when it needs additional resources, which brings in additional skill sets and a wealth of experience which benefits the Force in Dyfed-Powys.

The PCC queried what the Force’s position on direct entry officers was. The CC stated that he sees the scheme as a positive thing, and Dyfed-Powys became the only Force in the country in 2019 who appointed a direct entry superintendent. He stated that the Force would consider direct entry inspectors provided the individuals considered had a good set of transferable skills which would benefit the Force.

The PCC also queried whether it would be possible to include details of the Force’s engagement with victims in the Data Driven Report as part of his role is to support victims of crime.

The DCC stated that this year’s Development and Assessment Profile (DAP) for officers and staff has just been completed with a 93% completion rate, and that next year’s DAP will include a focus for the Force from September onward when all officers and staff will be expected to evidence how their role supports victims of crime.

**Action: The Data Driven Report to include information regarding how the Force is supporting victims.**

The discussion moved on to the Force’s abstraction rate during the lockdown period which didn’t exceed 10% at all and is now back at its regular levels of 4%. It was noted that the Force’s approach to flexible working and allowing individuals an extended period to complete their hours during the day had allowed staff more flexibility during the lockdown period.

The discussion moved on to overall crime levels and outcome rates which had increased to 2653 in June 2020 from 2055 in April 2020 as tourists returned to the area and lockdown measures are relaxed. The PCC referred to the outcome rates to understand the numbers in-Force compared to the national picture. The PCC referred to incidents which have resulted in an outcome of evidential difficulties where the victim does not support the action, as Dyfed-Powys’ figures are 41.6% compared to the national 24.3%. The DCC stated that the Force had reviewed their outcomes rate in order to address some issues. It was noted that Dyfed-Powys Police have a higher charge and summons rate than the national average, with the Force’s percentage being at 11.1% compared to 8.3%. The Force also has a higher rate of Out of Courts Disposals. The DCC stated that Dyfed-Powys investigate every crime while some forces screen up to 60% of their crimes meaning that they aren’t logged, skewing the picture of their outcome rates. The DCC stated that because Dyfed-Powys investigate all of their crimes right through to closure, a more detailed and accurate view of their outcome is developed and the DCC stated that Dyfed-Powys’ closure rate is at 80% compared to the national average of 79%. The DCC stated that the Force has an Incident Crime Allocation Team (ICAT) which reviews low-level cases and ensures that investigations provide the victims with the best possible service. The PCC was satisfied with the explanations and agreed with the Force’s response, however he was concerned that the prosecution levels were not included in the report which doesn’t give a complete picture of the investigation from end-to-end. The PCC was aware of the increased reporting to the offender diversionary scheme and was keen that these figures be recorder regularly in order to ensure the positive trajectory of the continuing work.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the reliability of officers in recording the correct outcome for investigations. It was noted that the Force have invested in audit support from the Crime Recording Team which review 60 cases a month in order to ensure that in future the outcomes are recorded with accuracy in order to provide a more reliable picture of outcome data.

**Action: Accurate outcome reporting to be discussed at Policing Board in October 2020..**

The discussion moved on to crime data integrity levels which the PCC expressed concern as this did not appear to be improving. The DCC stated that the work mentioned previously by the Crime Recording Team would support the improvement of crime data integrity levels. The team will focus on four key areas which are crime recording at first point of contact, victims NEEDS assessment on compliance with the victims’ code, the new crime assessment framework and triage and the HMIC recommendations and causes for concern. It was noted that HMIC required a 95% compliance with crime data integrity in order to receive a good grading. It was also noted that HMIC would commence remote inspections in September focusing on hate issues and Covid-19 issues, however no date has been confirmed for an inspection of Dyfed-Powys Police’s crime data integrity.

**Action: A policing board focus on crime data integrity to take place before the next policing accountability board meeting in November 2020.**

The discussion moved on to ongoing investigations. The PCC stated that each of the four Basic Command Units (BCUs) has seen a reduction in legacy cases, however Carmarthenshire in particular has reduced from 104 cases in September 2019 to 58 in June 2020. It was noted however that Powys’ position had reversed going from 70 to 107 in the same time period. The DCC stated that Carmarthenshire’s inspector has been dip-sampling cases in order to progress long-standing cases. This process will be replicated in Powys. It was noted that some cases in Powys are awaiting decisions and actions from other organisations including the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) in order to progress them. RS raised concerns over the challenges of returning to pre-Covid crime levels which addressing investigations which have been slowed down by Covid-19 during the lockdown period, in particular crimes relating to rural communities. The PCC stated that conversations have been ongoing between the four Commissioners in Wales, and with Welsh Government to address such issues, and the CC stated that Dyfed-Powys officers have been working with counterparts in North Wales Police to address rural crime issues during the lockdown period. The DCC stated that officers had been tasked with hosting virtual Police and Communities Together (PACT) meetings with rural communities to ensure that residents in rural areas are not isolated. It was noted that a PACT meeting had already been hosted in Carmarthenshire with councillors from the Llwynhendy area which will be replicated across the Force over the next few weeks.

The PCC queried how the Force was tackling violent crime including gang activity.The CC stated that the Force has no current live murder investigations and no embedded county lines within the Force, though a number of investigations on county lines offences continue. The DCC stated that the biggest increase within a single crime category is ‘violence without injury’ which includes stalking offences. It was noted that the Force has reviewed its recording of stalking incidents which has influenced the increase in reported cases. The Force is also focused on improving its wrap-around service for victims of stalking. It was noted that the number of stalking incidents had increased from 24 in July 2019 to 86 in June 2020 however the DCC stated that recording practices had changed so that in cases of domestic abuse which have resulted in restraining orders any unwanted contact should be recorded as stalking, leading to an increase in recorded incidents. It was noted that the crime count for the 12 months ending in June was 31,236 however the Chief Officers were confident that improved recording practices were contributing to the number. The DCC stated that partnership working has improved for operations focused on summer and tourism-related issues such as anti-social behaviour (ASB), noting that the Force had worked successfully with the British Transport Police in particular to support Operation Lion which is aimed at safeguarding residents and tourists in Tenby over the summer months.

The discussion moved on to drug offences which increased from 162 to 237 between April and May 2020. The DCC explained that training for officers was cancelled during the lockdown period which resulted in additional resources becoming available for response teams. The Force hosted a number of proactive days which targeted criminal drug activity, working with Operation Dovecote officers targeting individuals on the road bringing drugs into the Force area. The PCC posed several questions relating to roads policing resources, noting that the number of road deaths had reduced during the lockdown. The CC responded by stating that the Force had funded 2 doctors to support ‘Doc Bike UK’ for police advanced motorcycling courses, becoming only the third Force in the UK to do so. This means that officers have increased medical support when attending road traffic collisions. It was noted that Operation Darwen commenced on the 11th of July across the Force which engages with drivers and ensures that illegal drugs and equipment is not brought into the Force area, and promotes safe driving for road users. It was also noted that to date Operation Darwen has registered 27,000 motorcyclists across the Dyfed-Powys area as lockdown measures ease. EN stated that normally the Force would experience a much lesser number over the same period which should be taken into account.

It was noted that Public Order Offences had risen from 210 in March 2020 to 254 in June 2020. The CC explained that an increase in the number of recorded incidents was due to individuals reporting illegal activity in their communities breaching Covid-19 regulations. The PCC also stated that with the good weather and lockdown measures relaxing it might be expected that the number of public order offences would rise.

A brief discussion ensued regarding Sexual Offences which has seen a downward trend in the number of incidents, reducing from 148 in July 2019 to 104 in June 2020. The PCC queried whether analysis was ongoing on these figures and whether support was being highlighted to members of the public. The Board agreed that this category required consistent review. The PCC posed a question regarding the attrition rate for prosecutions of sexual offences and suggested that his office could support Force activity by reviewing the number of ongoing investigations in the Force which have reduced from 84 to 54 between January 2019 and May 2020.

**Action: The CoS to consider for a member of the OPCC to review the attrition rate for the prosecution of sexual offences.**

**Action: The PCC’s Local Criminal Justice Board to review the attrition rate for the prosecution of sexual offences, particularly with regard to the courts’ backlog of cases due to Covid-19.**

The discussion moved on to ASB, a crime type which increased rapidly during the lockdown period as reports were made of individuals flouting lockdown regulations. The number of incidents rose from 715 in March 2020 to 2761 in May 2020 as individuals reported incidents of Covid-19 regulations being broken. The DCC stated that the days following a Welsh Government announcement led to an increase in reported incidents as the public became more vigilant of Covid-19 regulations being breached in their area. The Board noted that individuals were happy to make reports to the police as breaches of regulations were seen as being ‘unfair’ to those adhering to Covid-19 rules.

The discussion moved on to domestic abuse and vulnerable individuals. The CC stated that the Chief Constables in Wales were concerned at the beginning of lockdown that the number of domestic abuse calls had reduced, and a lot of activity was conducted across Wales to encourage reporting domestic abuse and child abuse. The DCC stated that the Force’s Vulnerability Hub now does a secondary assessment of domestic cases which is then considered in a multi-agency meeting to ensure the best course of action is chosen for the individuals involved. The Force increased its online engagement activity relating to domestic abuse in order to direct individuals towards organisations and provide contact details which would help them. The Force also took part in a multi-agency group across Wales hosted by the Older People’s Commissioner which ensured the distribution of information with food parcels. Finally, the Force were included in a media campaign with a regional safeguarding board which hosted a lot of radio messaging directing individuals towards organisations which could offer support during lockdown. It was noted that month-on-month domestic abuse figures had reduced from 2019-2020, with examples including 751 in March 2019 and 670 in March 2020, and 868 in April 2019 and 797 in April 2020. The CC stated that he was confident that Dyfed-Powys Police have the infrastructure and capability in place to support the public experiencing incidents of domestic abuse and harassment. The DCC stated that the wrap around service provided by the vulnerability desk has made a positive impact on the number of individuals making repeated calls of domestic abuse incidents because the victims are receiving additional support at an early stage and putting mechanisms in place to avoid repeat incidents. The CC stated that this crime type remained a focus for the Force along with vulnerability and victims. The ACC stated that her review of End to End processes would focus on ensuring that separate elements of investigations are joined up in order to ensure the most effective and efficient service for victims.

The discussion moved on to the Force Contact Centre. The DCC stated that a significant amount of work has taken place in order to improve response times to calls. The Board recognised that calls for service relating to mental health had increased from 9920 in March 2020 to 10846 in June 2020 during the lockdown period.

**5 – Financial Performance during Quarter 1**

The PCC praised the finance team’s hard work to provide finance data and close accounts while working remotely during the lockdown period. The DoF provided the Board with a report projecting a net overspend of £498,000 (was £626,000) by the end of this financial year at this stage based upon current spending patterns. It was noted that the Force’s spending against the budget is being affected by Covid-19 with significant additional costs and losses in income being experienced throughout April, May and June. It was noted that expenditure on training, private transport and conferences show some savings as of August 2020 linked to Covid-19. The DoF stated that the projected out-turn position assumes that Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) provision and usage remains unchanged from the current level of £61,000 per month for the remainder of the financial year, and has assumed that income receipts and general spending levels will return to normal from October 2020.

The PCC queried about the collaboration between South Wales University and the University of Wales Trinity St. David’s and how this impacts the Force’s utilisation of the Police Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF). The CC stated that collaborative activity shouldn’t impact the Force because there is currently no mention of merging the universities – at present it was a strategic alliance.

The DoF stated that the position outlined in the report does not take into account any Government support nor reserve transfers in respect of Operation Talla at this stage. It was noted that although the Home Office has now indicated that funding will be provided in respect of PPE by the Department of Health, the exact mechanisms and scale of this payment including any terms and conditions in England and Wales remain to be clarified.

It was noted that the Force has submitted details of Operation Talla and Operation Uplift costs to the Home Office as required. The spending on Operational Uplift for June was £32,000 lower than the grant available for that month – however it is anticipated that for future months spending will exceed the grant amount – particularly so from August onwards with the recruitment of a further tranche of Operational Uplift recruits at the end of July.

The DoF stated that it is projected therefore that the Force will be unable to capitalise on the flexibility offered by the Home Office to utilise Police Uplift Programme Funding to offset the costs of Operation Talla as the grant paid for the first six months will be fully committed on meeting salary, appointment, equipment and training costs for new recruits.

The discussion moved on to the Capital budget which currently shows a summary of spending against budget for the 2020/21 financial year. In total, spending was £0.709 million against a budget of £16.224 million with £2.092 million being committed as of August 2020. The DoF stated that work is ongoing to update the Capital Programme for current and future years as part of the Medium Term Financial Planning process.

Discussion moved on to the Revenue budget which shows that the Force is expecting some savings against Police Officer and Staff budgets for the current year as of August 2020. This is due to vacancies, additional leavers and delays in recruitment plans caused by the Covid-19 outbreak and other factors. This projection assumes a 2.5% pay award for officers and staff from September 2020.

The DoF stated that overtime and bank holiday headings are showing a combined net saving at this stage with a small overspend against bank holidays. An over spend of £540,000 is projected against the ‘Other Non-Pay Headings’ which is mainly attributable to projected PPE costs. The Force is also projecting an overspend against training and recruitment costs at this stage however this assumes that external training courses postponed are rebooked later in the year and that any savings resulting from slippage in the training plan are carried forward as a reserve. The DoF closed by stating that income shortfalls of £511,000 are anticipated based upon an assumption that activities such as driver training and Mutual Aid receipts return to normal levels of activity from October onwards.

The DoF clarified that the present revenue position also does not take account of any Government support nor reserve transfers in respect of Operation Talla at this stage. Although the Home Office has now indicated that funding will be provided in respect of PPE by the Department of Health, the exact mechanisms and scale of this payment including any terms and conditions in England and Wales remain to be clarified. The DoF stated that the position is evolving and further revisions to this projected position will be needed as the year progresses and as the position on funding becomes clearer.

The CFO echoed the DoF's presentation, and emphasised that it is still early in the financial year and that many risks and uncertainties remain in the light of the current situation. The DoF stated that it was pleasing to see that the investments the Force has made into IT equipment and improved network connectivity have paid off as staff have been able to work effectively from their homes during the lockdown period.

**6 – Action and Risk Summary from Meeting**

It was agreed that a set of actions would be distributed shortly after the meeting.

**7 – Any other business**

No other business was discussed at the meeting.

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| ACTION SUMMARY FROM MEETING ON 04/08/2020 |
| Action No | Action Summary | To be progressed by: |
| **PAB 141** | **The Data Driven Report to include information regarding how the Force is supporting victims.** | **Kerrie Phillips/Staff Officer** |
| **PAB 142** | **The CoS to consider for a member of the OPCC to review the attrition rate for the prosecution of sexual offences.** | **CoS** |
| **PAB 143** | **The PCC’s Local Criminal Justice Board to review the attrition rate for the prosecution of sexual offences, particularly with regard to the courts’ backlog of cases due to Covid-19.** | **CoS/Alison Perry** |

**Date of next meeting**

November the 16th 09:00 – 13:00 – Skype.