

**Meeting: Police Accountability Board**

**Venue: Cothi Room, University of Trinity St. David’s, Carmarthen**

**Date: 17th of February 2020**

**Time: 17:00 – 20:00**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Members:** | Mr Dafydd Llywelyn, Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)Chief Constable Mark Collins (MC)Temporary Deputy Chief Constable Claire Parmenter (T/DCC)Mr Edwin Harries, Director of Finance (DoF)Mrs Carys Morgans, Chief of Staff, OPCC (CM)Mrs Beverley Peatling, Chief Finance Officer (BP) |
| **Also Present:** | Mr Ben Cole, Force Communications (EN)Mr Gruff Ifan, Policy and Engagement Advisor, OPCC (GI)Miss Mair Harries, Executive Support, OPCC (MH) |
| **Observers** | Members of the Dyfed-Powys Police and Crime Panel:Cllr Emlyn Schiavone (ES)Ms Helen Thomas (HT) |
| **Apologies:** | Temporary Assistant Chief Constable Peter Roderick (T/ACC) |

|  |
| --- |
| ACTION SUMMARY FROM MEETING ON 18/11/2019 |
| Action No | Action Summary | To be progressed by: |
| **PAB 129** | **DPP and Dyfed-Powys OPCC to ensure effective communication is published on social media in relation to updates made to officers’ stalking training. This action to coincide with the launch of new stalking legislation in February 2020.** | **Ongoing** |
| **PAB 130** | **DPP’s Performance Team to alter the appearance of the ‘y’ axis in the graphs presented in the performance report.** | **Complete** |
| **PAB 131** | **The CoS to meet with DPP’s Performance Team to ensure that the relevant data is included in the public version of the performance report.** | **Complete** |
| **PAB 132** | **An update on the appointment of a fraud prevention officer within DPP to be discussed at Policing Board within the next few months.** | **Complete** |
| **PAB 133** | **A joint letter to be drafted and sent from DPP and the OPCC jointly about officer recruitment as part of Operation Uplift by the 30th of November.** | **Complete** |
| **PAB 134** | **The CFO to be added to the circulation list for DPP’s Operation Uplift meetings.** | **Complete** |

**1 - Apologies and Introductions**

Apologies were received by T/ACC Peter Roderick.

**2 - Discussion with Members of the Public**

The PCC and CC welcomed representation from The University of Wales Trinity St. David’s faculty and students and hosted a brief question and answer session with them.

**3 – Minutes of previous meeting held on the 18th of November**

Excepting an amendment suggested by the CFO the minutes were held to be a true and accurate reflection of the previous meeting held in November 2019.

The PCC opened the meeting by praising Dyfed-Powys Police officers for their exemplary and dedicated work over the previous two weeks in the face of extremely adverse weather, and offered his condolences to the family of an individual and the wider community in Ystradgynlais where a member of the public drowned over the weekend.

**4 – Force Performance Report Quarter 3**

The PCC opened the discussion by referring to the outcome rate for the previous 12 months ending in December 2019. The PCC expressed concern that Dyfed-Powys is now the 38th safest place in England and Wales in accordance with Home Office and iQuanta data. A discussion ensued regarding the semantics of this statement which appeared misleading as Dyfed-Powys has the third lowest level of recorded crime per 1000 population out of 41 forces. The PCC remained concerned as Dyfed-Powys has previously been the safest force in England in Wales, with the CFO saying that this claim was going to be included in the PCC’s precept documentation.

**Action: The Force to confirm Dyfed-Powys’ placing out of 41 forces as the safest place in England and Wales according to Home Office and iQuanta data ahead of the publication of the OPCC’s precept notice.**

The discussion moved on to the topic of Victim Satisfaction. The PCC expressed concern over the percentage of victims satisfied with the ease of their contact with Dyfed-Powys Police which reduced by 7.5% from the same quarter last year. The PCC asked whether a plan was in place to improve the current situation. The DCC stated that there was a plan in place, and emphasised that the survey conducted at the end of the previous quarter only surveyed 620 individuals. The PCC queried the progress made towards the solution for an All-Wales victim survey and was informed by the CoS that meetings had been conducted between practitioners and All-Wales leads on the subject. An update will be provided at the All Wales Policing Group (AWPG) on the 12th of March.

In the previous year over a thousand individuals were surveyed, leading to inconsistent responses. The DCC also stated that work was ongoing within the Force Contact Centre (FCC) to crime incidents at the first point of contact and direct individuals to an appropriate department so that a dialogue can open between the victim and the appropriate individuals in the Force.

The discussion moved on to the FCC and the levels of call abandonment figures for the 999 number in July and August of 2019 at 88 and 77 seconds respectively. The PCC stated that this was a concern alongside issues raised to him by members of the public stating that contacting Dyfed-Powys Police by phone resulted in long periods on hold. The CC stated that all abandoned 999 calls receive call backs from the FCC to ensure that the caller doesn’t need emergency assistance. The PCC raised similar concerns regarding call abandonment levels for the 101 number and was informed by the DCC that a 29-point plan was in place to improve this performance. This includes a monitoring system to assess whether the automated message on the 101 number has assisted a caller by directing them to a more appropriate service for example the county council, and the publication of the direct dial numbers for specific officers and departments. It was noted that Chief Officers had received a presentation on the plan for the 101 number and were satisfied that the recommendations will assist answer rates in the FCC. The CC also noted that four zero-hours contracts had been offered to retiring staff members within the FCC to cover absence and sickness leave.

The discussion moved on to demand on the FCC. The DCC stated that several plans were ongoing to ensure that there is ample opportunity for the public to contact the Force including a digital desk which will allow the public to contact the Force via social media. This will utilise the skills of staff already in the place within the FCC, and will allow staff to speak with multiple members of the public simultaneously as opposed to speaking to one person on the time on the phone.

The PCC moved the discussion on to Crime Data Integrity. The most recent inspection by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS) determined that the Force ‘requires improvements’ in terms of its data integrity. Audits conducted during 2019 achieved a performance grade of 88% or higher from the National Crime Recording Standards (NCRS). The DCC raised concerns that the sample size provided to the audit was small at 60 out of over a thousand calls.

The discussion moved on to Crime Volume Overview with the PCC raising concerns that the rolling average of crime had increased from under 2000 in January 2017 to 2598 in December 2019. The CC stated that this increase could be attributed to improved crime recording, malicious communication and crime data integrity. The Force had also improved its recording of rural crimes and coercive control among others following awareness campaigns in-Force which has ensured an increase in the number of those types of crimes being recorded. The PCC followed this up by asking whether the CC was satisfied with the number of officers in Dyfed-Powys’ specialist units and was informed that the CC was happy with the blend of staff and skills in those units, however more officers within those departments would be useful. It was noted that an increase of 44 officers as part of Operation Uplift would benefit the Force.

The PCC queried whether Digital Media Officers (DMIs) had been deployed within the Force. The DCC stated that Crime Scene Investigators had received additional training to include digital investigation as part of their skill-set. The PCC also asked whether travelling criminality had been targeted by the Force in recent weeks and was informed that Operation Mabel is in place to tackle this particular crime which includes incidents such as quad bike thefts in rural locations of the Force.

**Action: Mair Harries to ensure that good news stories regarding Operation Mabel are presented at the Policing in a Rural Setting Conference on the 6th of March.**

The discussion moved on to county lines activity with the PCC querying the CC’s opinion on the matter. The CC stated that there were currently no embedded county lines within the Force area, however county lines activity can be seen within Dyfed-Powys due to travelling criminality from neighbouring forces. It was noted that teams including Roads Policing and Neighbourhood Police Teams (NPTs) are working with other officers to create a proactive response to county lines activities.

The discussion moved on to victimless prosecutions in relation to domestic abuse. Cases where victims do not support the action account for 65.8% of outcomes in domestic abuse cases, and the PCC queried what the process was for this area of performance. The DCC stated that a piece of work has been completed regarding outcomes for sexual offenses and the mental health of the victim to establish why so many victims stop supporting investigations. The DCC stated that this was often because the crime had been recorded by a third party, and the perception of the victim having concerns over making the situation worse for themselves by supporting prosecution. The CC stated that safeguarding had been improved and the work of the Vulnerability Desk ensured that victims were supported along their journey through an investigation. The CC also stated that the Vulnerability Desk answered many recommendations for the Force by HMIC for supporting victims to ensure a reduction in the number of cases where victims do not support the action. The PCC remarked that Kevin Vanderpost’s review of the Goleudy Victim Service within the Force had also provided a number of recommendations which could be implemented and used to improve the Force’s performance on this particular aspect.

The discussion moved on to Violence Against the Person. The DCC stated that this crime type had seen an increase from 830 recorded crimes in December 2017 to 1145 in December 2019. The DCC stated that this was due to improved recording practices, and that figures between September 2019 and December 2019 were stable without seeing a dramatic rise in numbers. The DCC was satisfied that this crime type was now being properly recorded by Dyfed-Powys Police following increased awareness among officers of harder-to-identify crimes such as stalking and coercive control. The PCC queried how the Force risk-assessed events in-Force such as rugby internationals and concerts, and was informed by the CC that ahead of such events officer leave is cancelled and increased officer presence is ensured.

The PCC queried what the CC’s thoughts were in relation to members of the public wanting access to police stations. The CC stated that where stations are occupied by officers, members of the public should be granted access to stations whether it is during opening hours or not. The PCC suggested that this may not be the case across the Force and recommended a consistent approach to opening the door to the public at all Dyfed-Powys stations. The CoS stated that this activity could be recommended to the Connecting Communities Board for review.

**Action: The Force’s Connecting Communities Board to review Dyfed-Powys’ performance at ensuring public access to stations following concerns raised to the PCC that calls for access to stations are not answered despite officers manning the stations.**

A discussion ensued regarding the mobile police vans deployed in each of the four counties in Dyfed-Powys. The PCC stated that some officers found tasking officers to man the vans challenging because those officers are unable to patrol away from the van. The CC suggested that officers should lock the vans and attend to a call if there was a requirement to do so.

The PCC closed the discussion by querying the Force what causes them the most concern in terms of Force performance. The CC stated that rape and serious sexual offences require further work in order to bring Force performance to a higher standard on these types of crime. The PCC raised concerns regarding announced Home Office investment in rape centres in Newtown and Aberystwyth due to no investment having been planned for the Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) in Carmarthen.

**5 – Financial Performance during Quarter 3**

The PCC stated his gratitude to the DoF and CFO for their combined work on the financial report. The DoF stated that the Force’s projected underspend as of January 2020 was £287,000. It was noted that the projection in December 2019 was £397,000 however increased operational activity had caused significant spending in recent weeks. The DoF informed the Board that the Force projection incorporates the shortfall in grant from Operation Uplift of £158,000 and also includes a projected spend of £160,000 in the current year for a Social Media Platform which was highlighted as a spending priority for 2020/21’s budget, alongside an additional £160,000 in respect of ongoing operations.

The DoF went on to state that overtime spending has been included within the budget for the year despite recent operational activity. It was also noted that vacancies, retirements and transfers of police officers and staff had offset the cost implications of the additional 0.5% pay award from September 2019.

The PCC queried the necessity of increasing the budget of Dedicated Security Post and Critical National Infrastructure by £121,000, and was informed that additional income was earned from driver training and from the Uplift Grant. This was in turn offset by shortfalls against interest receipts, firearms licencing, prosecution cost income and mutual aid receipts. The PCC queried the longevity of the aforementioned income streams and was informed that in future this would be on a more ad-hoc basis.

The PCC queried whether the fact that the budget announcement is delayed is a cause for concern for the DoF. The DoF was satisfied that a settlement had been announced although some questions remained about the allocation of funds as part of Operation Uplift.

A discussion ensued regarding the Year to Date budget which is currently indicating a net underspend position of £799,000, although this is likely to reduce to around £287,000 by the end of the year once the full costs of Operation Uplift and the purchase of the Social Media Platform in the current year are progressed. It was also noted that most departments are within their year to date budget costs however pressures are being experienced in the Criminal Justice Department which is currently incurring staff costs, and the Business Support Unit which is incurring income headings. The situation is currently being managed via routine business partnering meetings at a low level.

The DoF went on to state that the latest Capital Spending position amounts to £2.715 million against a revised budget of £11.592 million with a sum of £2.899 million being committed in terms of purchase orders processed.

The CFO stated that she and the DoF had reviewed the variances between the previous report and the current one. Issues regarding what information is held in the finance ledger had been identified however work was ongoing to ensure a level of understanding among budget holders that the ledger should be a living document to be updated regularly.

**6 – OPCC follow-up report from Policing Board (by exception)**

The CoS opened the discussion by stating that the follow-up report was an opportunity for the PCC to review actions raised at Policing Board meetings during the previous quarter. The PCC reviewed the actions listed, remarking that he had had an opportunity to meet with senior officers in Pembrokeshire to discuss the new Neighbourhood Policing Structure and how its implementation would be communicated to the public and public representatives. The PCC stated that following previous discussions with officers where he had asked how the Force quantifies the time spent by Neighbourhood Policing Teams away from the police stations, the Force were now using officers’ airwave data to plot the time spent by officers out in the community. The DCC echoed that the Force were improving their obtaining of qualitative and quantitative data to evidence their work enhancing Force practices.

The discussion moved on to an update on the outcome of a meeting between the Force and the Independent Office for Police Complaints following a change in the legislation for complaints implemented on the 1st of February 2020. The PCC stated that following a change to the process for the public to contact the Force’s Public Service Bureau which deals with complaints and compliments to the Force, his office had seen increased telephone traffic from individuals wishing to contact the Bureau. It was noted that the PCC’s Office would make note of further communication relating to this issue to be reviewed at a later date.

Discussion continued to the final action relating to officer numbers. The DCC informed the Board that Human Resources had provided Chief Officers with a succession plan for the next 8-12 months which includes the predicted number of people retiring and leaving the Force which will assist in future planning.

**7 – Minimum Price of Alcohol**

The Board acknowledged documentation informing readers of the change in legislation relating to the minimum price of alcohol.

|  |
| --- |
| ACTION SUMMARY FROM MEETING ON 17/02/2020 |
| Action No | Action Summary | To be progressed by: |
| **PAB 135** | **The Force to confirm Dyfed-Powys’ placing out of 41 forces as the safest place in England and Wales according to Home Office and iQuanta data ahead of the publication of the OPCC’s precept notice.** | **Force** |
| **PAB 136** | **Mair Harries to ensure that good news stories regarding Operation Mabel are presented at the Policing in a Rural Setting Conference on the 6th of March.** | **Mair Harries** |
| **PAB 137** | **The Force’s Connecting Communities Board to review Dyfed-Powys’ performance at ensuring public access to stations following concerns raised to the PCC that calls for access to stations are not answered despite officers manning the stations.** | **Force** |

**Date of next meeting**

To be confirmed, June 2020