



**POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR BEDFORDSHIRE
DELIVERY AND BEATING CRIME MINUTES – PART 1**

21st February 2022

Attending:	Festus Akinbusoye, Police Crime Commissioner - OPCC (FA)
	Garry Forsyth, Chief Constable – Force (GF)
	Trevor Rodenhurst, Deputy Chief Constable - Force (TR)
	Sharn Basra, Assistant Chief Constable – Force (SB)
	Phil Wells, Chief Finance Officer – Force (PW)
	Anna Villette, Interim Chief Executive – OPCC (AC)
	Katie Beaumont, Transparency Manager - OPCC (KB)
	Wayne Humberstone, Head of Delivery – OPCC (WH)
	Rachel Glendenning, Staff Officer - Force (RG)
	Gemma McCormack, PA to PCC and Chief Executive - OPCC (GM)

<u>ITEM 1 - WELCOME & MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AND FOR AGREEMENT AND MATTERS ARISING</u>
FA welcomed everyone to the meeting, the minutes of the previous meeting were discussed and all were in agreement with their accuracy.
<u>ITEM 2- OPCC QUESTIONS OR ITEMS TO RAISE</u>
2.1 Actions from Previous Meeting
98 – The provision of information around the community teams on the website. GA advised that single online home is now live in Force and the issue was because Single Online does not allow the provision of the Officers direct contact details, it has a team contact details. GA was going to have a conversation with the Lead, Simon Cole, but hasn't been able to do that as yet. To remain open.
102 – KB updated that there are no concerns, KB has been on annual leave which is why the papers has not yet been completed.
110 – GF advised the NPCC piece around race and inclusion has not yet been published and it won't be published in February. We still need more discussions at Council and some views may change in light of the resignation of the Commissioner of the Met. The plan is still going to be published in March, but we are hopeful that we will be able to get some views from the Independent Scrutiny Oversight Board members who will have just been appointed towards the end of this month. The finalised position for the forward of the Plan is still an ongoing discussion amongst Chiefs and will go back to Council, either for an Extraordinary Meeting or at a Council in March.



117 – GF advised that the vetting update has been sent to AV, additional resource has now been put into vetting but it is still a live issue and we need to look at productivity and it will be coming back to JCOB in due course. There is work ongoing around productivity and resource levels in there. TR updated that the 7 Force team have completed a review and they are looking at implementing a number of recommendations that will improve their efficiency. On top of that there probably is an ask still for additionality but they are going to bring that back to the March JCOB. We have made it clear that we want to see all the efficiencies delivered before we consider any additional investment. In the meantime they have been provided with some additional resource and we are working with them to prioritise things like the FCC etc.

FA thanked everyone for getting a large amount of the Action Points done especially around the Panel and the Budget.

Gemma to book a meeting for FA and Dave Thompson (Bev Woodward) in West Midlands.

2.2 Information Document – January

KB stated that she will circulate the new document around to all, this has been delayed slightly due her being on annual leave.

ITEM 3 – PERFORMANCE FOCUS

3.1 Crime Performance Figures with Restricted Detail

SB updated regarding Custody, in December we were following a trend of a decrease in the number of people going through both Custody Suites and that was after some peaks prior to that, that picked up in January and is back to normal levels and SB is satisfied that there are no issues there. There is some good practice within Custody, in January and following two months of high detentions refused again we went back to normal levels and every Custody detention that is refused is reviewed on a case by case basis. This is to pick out whether or not it was necessary, proportionate or justified but also whether there is any learning for the Custody Sergeant, but SB is satisfied there are no issues there.

In relation to disposals for last month, the charged rate was down of those through Custody, but it was exceptionally high the previous month. What is pleasing is that the NFA rate for January is also down and that we are making better use of bail and again SB is satisfied that there is nothing there that is any area of concern. There has been a positive continuation of trend in relation to children detained, again we had high numbers which increased from March 2021 all the way through to a peak in October 2021 and then again stable in November 2021. We have now gone back to normal levels of children being detained in both December 2021 and January 2022. Where we have seen fewer of children detained overnight, this was very low in January 2022 and again two months in succession where no children were charged and detained and kept in Police Custody overnight. That does come with the condition that sometimes there are 16/17 year olds who commit serious crimes and need to be detained overnight, but they are very consistent in terms of those figures.



SB stated that in terms of general crime, if you were to pick out crime recorded levels across the board there are two areas that he would focus on. One is, those crimes where we want to see increased reporting and we have seen increased reporting in rape, serious sexual offences and stalking and harassment year to date. That is a positive and shows that people have got confidence and feel comfortable in reporting to the Police. Where we would like to see a decrease is in neighbourhood crime and that is in line with the National Crime in Policing measures such as burglary, robbery and theft related offences and we can see decreases in year to date in those crimes. This is positive news in relation to our recorded figures. Where the challenges come are in our solved rate, we are still only just above double figures across the board, although there are pockets of good work in certain crime areas. In domestic abuse we have seen crimes going down, what we can say in relation to last year is that we have seen 398 fewer victims of domestic abuse which is positive. We have seen an increase in our solved crimes and solved rates in domestic abuse. The most significant positive in regards to repeat domestic abuse, for clarity, repeat domestic abuse is if there is a second crime with that victim in 12 months and what we have seen is a reduction in the number of repeat domestic abuse victims. Historically the figures have always been above 30% and for the first time in January, we have seen it below the 30% mark which is positive. The work that goes on there is partnership wide and the support network that is there to help prevent victims from being repeat victims of domestic abuse.

FA advised that it is really good to see that we are getting fewer cases of domestic abuse and it is good credit to the partnership working and the awareness being raised around this, that is really positive. FA asked, on the outcomes for domestic abuse, it shows on the report that the named suspect where the victim is supporting, has fallen massively. Do you know why we have this gap between named suspect victim support and named suspect victim does not support as that has gone from 70% in February 2021 down to 30% to date.

SB advised that this is a positive as the victim does not support so that's gone down and that is what we want to see and that is because of the excellent work of people like the Victim Engagement Officers. Where a victim has reported the crime and they may have said 'this has happened to me, this is the person who is responsible for it but I don't want to support any prosecution' and that happens historically, it has happened because a lack of trust and confidence in policing, it may have bearing on the relationship and the fact that they are in fear of further offending by that offender. The fact that it has gone down highlights the fact that the individual feels comfortable in their surroundings and the vast majority of that is because of the support network that we have as a countywide approach. GF stated that we want to drive down the number of Outcome 16's that we have and we want to be taking the opportunities to arrest named individuals and process them, so that is a good indication of victim confidence that we haven't enjoyed but the overuse of Outcome 16 is a national issue. It has always been easy for someone to say they don't support prosecution and Police might take that, ask them to sign and move on but if we spend time with people explaining the process and what support they can get, we might get better engagement with them at that stage which may then follow through to the criminal justice process.



SB updated that rape reports are up from last year but we have had improved outcomes, our solved rate shows as second only to Nottingham against our most similar Force. That does then bring great pressure on our RASSO Team in terms of the workload that comes through that team.

SB advised that for burglary residential there were 334 fewer victims compared to last year and an improved and increased rate in solved rates with Bedfordshire being the strongest performing Force. GF shared that it is worth reflecting on the performance against last year as we saw a big drop off in burglaries as a result of being in lockdown, now being out of lockdown to see a further reduction in that is particularly impressive.

SB updated regarding neighbourhood crime and noted that although as a county we have seen reductions in neighbourhood crime compared to this time last year, we are still higher than our MSF (most similar Force), our Achilles heel is our solved rate with offences such as personal robbery, vehicle crime and theft from person, these have remained low and this will be without doubt a focus from the Government next year, this year they have asked to see reductions and next year there will be a real focus on outcomes.

FA asked regarding solved rates overall, it seems like there was a spike between December and January in overall solved rates which was extremely positive. Do we know why that is. SB advised there will be the throughput of crime and sometimes it can be because of backlogs being cleared and therefore that month will show greater, it may be that there is one individual who may have admitted a number of offences and those crimes have gone on, so rather than compare month on month, we like to use a rolling 12 month compared to this time last year.

SB updated on some positive news in relation to serious violence, we have seen the reductions in serious violence across the board and the letters we have received in regards to the continued funding just highlights the excellent work that is going on there. We have had 10 mapped gangs, 30 live OCG's (Organised Crime Gangs) and 6 priority individuals, 18 county lines groups and they are running 37 lines and we have 3 exported lines around the Country.

SB stated that although we have done some excellent work in terms of reducing the casework loads and we have seen under 5,000 assigned crimes across the board, when you break that down into teams that is still quite high so our teams are still up against it. That is reflected in what the supervisors have to do in terms of VCOP (Victims Code of Practice) compliance and the supervisor reviews. VCOP compliance is good and is just shy of the 80% mark, supervisor reviews have gone down this month but again this is the number of experienced supervisors and the sheer workload and caseload that they have to manage.

FA asked in relation to the VCOP, what is the National benchmark that we are trying to meet. SB advised there isn't a benchmark as it is a snapshot in time as depending on the number of crimes that are going through the system, that can fluctuate so it is individually managed. The other element is the actual content of that VCOP and what was the intervention with the individual like and what did you actually do when you updated them.



FA asked if we have anything in place that lets residents of the county know what they should expect from Bedfordshire Police and the Victim Care Team. SB confirmed that every victim of crime provided with a copy or a link to the Victims Code because there are 12 elements to that which every victim is entitled to and every Officer has to satisfy. At the start of any investigation, the Officer will agree a Victim Contract and what that means is; when will they update them, how they will update them and, in some cases, who they will update and that is what is tracked as the Victims Code of Practice. In regards to digital solution for our victim satisfaction surveys, at the moment we are very limited with the number of surveys that we can complete and the number of surveys we do complete. We are making great progress in terms of an IT solution whereby people will get automated messages on their phones or email and at the moment we are building that question set for that survey tool. We have bought into a company for this and they have given us a go live date of the 1st April 2022. Hampshire are a Force who are also using the same company and we have seen that it is working well there. We will have a pilot period where we will limit it to crime types just to make sure the IT is working.

SB advised that he won't be providing an update for the FCC as there will be a spotlight feature on it at next month's meeting and also, there will be some questions in the open sessions which I will be responding to there.

FA thanked SB for the two papers that have been provided for this meeting.

FA asked regarding Jackie being seconded with the HMIC and Jody is manning the fort, is Jackie being replaced and who is going to be picking up the workload. FA stated that the team are doing a fantastic job but their workload is massive in terms of ratio compared to the national average. Is this team able to function with just the one Inspector. SB advised that yes, they are and that is due to the excellent structure that we have got in place. We are supporting Jackie as that is such an important role for her as an individual and also for what she will bring back into the Force. We won't just be leaving Jody there without any support as we think we can manage quite well and when you look at the actual reports, as a team it is not too obsessive but allows us to be able to utilise that role/individual somewhere else within the organisation where there is a greater pressing need. We are keeping a watchful eye on the situation and if Jody needs support, he will get it.

FA asked, if the team is able to function with just one Inspector, will they need two in the future. SB shared that this has given us an opportunity to scope, if we don't lose any services and we are happy with how it is going, it gives us the opportunity to use that Inspector in another role somewhere else in the organisation.

SB advised that we took advantage of the City of London and had a peer review, we are one of the first Forces to do that, they identified 5 areas of good practice across the way we deal with fraud and 12 areas of key findings because they didn't see them as essential and recommendations but, in terms of best practice, the Force may consider and one of the items for consideration for the Force is a dedicated Inspector. It gives us the opportunity to consider and explore this if needed.



3.2 Offender Management Paper
<u>ITEM 4 – CC UPDATES</u>
4.1 Verbal Opportunity for CC to Raise Items to the OPCC
A discussion on Luton Airport policing took place.
4.2 HMIC Update
GF advised that we still do not have a firm publication date as the report still isn't finalised along with grades, that is down to other Forces going back with factual accuracy. We believe that the earliest it will be published is the week commencing the 7 th March 2022. As soon as we have received it we will link in with the OPCC to work on a joint comms plan.
<u>ITEM 5 – LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE</u>
5.1 Chief Constable Complaints
KB advised that there are currently no concerns around Chief Constable complaints.
5.2 Reviews
KB advised there are no current concerns in relation to reviews.
5.3 Culture Update
GF shared that we have our final Sergeants and Inspectors Workshop on Wednesday. We are scheduling a rerun of our original culture surveys that started all this nearly two years ago and they will be going out and the focus groups to benchmark where we are now compared to where we were previously, and we will be starting those off in April/May time. We are also working up a performance framework to look at some of the quantity measures that we can look at to see if we are succeeding in the culture change. GF has invited Phil Cain and Sunita Gamblin who are both previous Deputies in the Race Portfolio to come in and have a look at the PSD work that we have done working with our Diversity Subgroups to see if we can notice any difference between where we were and where we are now. We are also looking at other elements around contacts through Blue bell, how many people have we generated in terms of whistleblowing contacts.
FA shared that this is a brilliant idea that the Exec are doing these training sessions with the line managers as it is so crucial. FA asked when the plan is to go around this group of leaders again. GF shared that SLT days are planned for the future on an ongoing basis, as well as the Supervisors days, in April we start out 'Better for Bedfordshire' days and that will be for everyone in the Force to get cycled through and again it will be culture based. There is a cycle planned throughout the year where we recontact the Inspectors and Sergeants again. We are fortunate that we started this two years ago and other Forces are looking at what we are doing and are doing similar things themselves. GF advised that when the data is received in the summer, he will share this with the OPCC.



FA asked TR how well he feels this culture piece of the work that is being done is being received within the Force. TR shared that this is not being done anywhere else and there is not an Exec who is talking to its workforce in the way that we are doing and using live life examples. What I am not getting is any negative pushback from the Federation, support groups or anything like that so that to me feels like it is landing. It is a work in progress and even at 'Ask the Exec', we do livestreams to ask any questions for the whole workforce, there is nowhere else that is doing that and having those frank conversations.

FA asked if there was a business case that was put together for this a couple of years ago and what do you hope the end result will be. GF advised that there is not a business case and the cost for the whole programme has been around above different which is costly and the other element is around opportunity costs as it takes a lot of time to bring all of the leaders and staff together. GF stated he feels that this is an investment in the time and opportunity which is really worth it. He explained that he doesn't think that we will ever get to the end game, the culture piece is difficult to deliver and measure. We are trying to develop the performance framework to understand the hard numbers part of it around referrals into the Bluebell service, whistleblowing issues and whether we are improving the disproportionality rates in PSD so there are some hard things we can measure in there and some numbers we can measure but I don't think we will ever finish it. Culture is formed over decades, and it will take us at least a decade to deliver the culture once by which time we will probably need to tweak it again as it is constantly changing all of the time. We are trying to get the core consistent framework around the organisation on how we want to treat each other, treat the public and how we would like to be treated ourselves.

FA asked if this has been factored into the Estates Strategy as it would be interested to know how much the built environment our staff are working in has a role to play in the culture. PW advised it is part of the existing Estates Strategy around the condition of the buildings which is why we have invested quite a lot in terms of Luton. If you look at it 18 months ago, it was a worse state than it is in now and things like windows that haven't been replaced for 50 years are now being replaced, painting is taking place in the rooms, updated toilets etc. The things that they have asked for when we have been out to visit the Stations are now gradually being done and are included in the new Estates Strategy as well.

ITEM 6 – QUARTERLY REPORTING EFFICIENCY

6.1 Force Demand Paper

PW advised that we do this every year, and the main changes are on Response and FCC where they have gone from yellow in 2021 to the equivalent of red in 2022. We have put the Gold Group in FCC so we have reacted to some of those already. PVP was red last time and we have now split that between PVP and RASSO, they still sit in the red but they are now split out and we are trying to offset some of that demand, but we do know that it is around our detective capability. The other big change is mental health, which following the pandemic we knew we were going to have an increase



in our mental health capacity and demand, and we are looking at making sure that we have permanent resources into the Control Room and into our MHST.

6.2 Force Management Statement

Ed will be talking this through with AV this week and he will also talk through the SDA as well which will be helpful from an OPCC point of view

6.3 Strategic Planning and Delivery Cycle

At the moment, following agreement at the Police and Crime Panel regarding the Precept increase, we are finalising budgets as well as planning for the PPB process for 2023/2024.

6.4 Capital Programme

PW updated regarding the area of change for the Capital Programme we approved for 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 is the fact that when we completed the programme for 2021/2022 we talked about a firing range and we talked about a training facility but we hadn't developed anything. We are now in a position whereby they are being developed and we are better sighted on what the costs of those may be and we are also better sighted on the timing of those payments. They are now properly reflected in the Capital Programme. On the firing range the plan is that we get charged based on our proportion of our armed policing unit rather than RE and PW and AV will discuss this further. PW is hoping that the £5.2 million that we have included in the Capital Programme is worst case scenario rather than best case scenario.

PW advised that there will always be increased payments on the Capital Programme because in essence all you as the PCC do is approve the single years programme so you will be approving the 2022/2023 programme. The other is to give you an indication of what the spend may look like in future years so the £5.2 million is in future years rather than in 2022/2023. What we did last year was we had £2.5 million in the Capital Programme rather than the £5.2 million because at that stage we had no business case, so every year when the programme gets rolled forward there will be new investments that you as a PCC need to consider and we need to fund. Overall, if you look at the Capital Programme that we reported in December for 2021/2022 outturn which include the future years, the borrowing requirement in this programme is less than it was then even with the increases.

FA asked regarding cyber resilience, have we factored into the resilience that the Force has got in terms of cyber security.

We have Cyber Resilience Workshops conducted across senior leadership teams across BCH and we have got awareness to test and improve our continuity plans.



FA asked in terms of the Estates Strategy, do we have a timeline by which Cater Jonas are going to be giving us their recommendations. PW advised that they are still working on it, but we will have it by the end of March 2022. We know there are areas such as the Biggleswade Station that they will say is not fit for purpose and we are already starting to work on that, but in terms of any major schemes that they come in, the costs for that won't already be in the Capital Programme. PW advised that following the recommendations, it would be helpful to have a workshop for discussions around this.

8.2 – FA asked what is the plan for the Section 106 money. PW advised that there is no specific plan and this is only for Central Bedfordshire, we are using it as part of our capital resources, it is not a large sum, only around a couple of thousand pounds and it goes back to Section 106 from 2014. It is just monies that have sat there, and we have used them for things like the custody at Luton and various other things. We use them as a funding mechanism for the Capital Programme to reduce our borrowing without any specific scheme.

FA asked for any updates regarding Greyfriars. PW advised that we are in a reasonably good place at the moment and there are two items that are outstanding. One is, the lands that forms some of the development needs formal approval, it has had approval from the Mayor, but needs formal approval and that happens during the first week of March 2022. We have agreed a price with the Mayor and the Borough, but it needs to be part of the formal process. The other part is, because the development attracts 106 contributions, we must agree in a legal document when those 106 contributions are going to be paid. Normally it is a housing development that attracts the 106 contributions but because ours is a single site and single we are just trying to agree what those trigger payments look like to make it more attractive for the perspective buyer as, if those 106 contributions are too early on, on purchase of the land they will pay over the 106 and no one will buy it. They have the legal document that we have drafted, and their legal team is looking through it. We are confident that by mid March, everything that we needed to do to put it on the market should be done.

FA asked if we have considered other options that may be available to him, such as the disposal or use of that asset. PW advised that this is something that we have been looking at since 2016 and have explored every option available to us at this time. PW confirmed that we have a valuation, but we do not yet know what a developer is prepared to pay for Greyfriars until it goes out into the public domain.

FA thanked PW and his team for all the work they have completed around the budget.

PW advised regarding the budget monitoring reports and said that the overall groups for OPCC and the Force, we are estimating around half a million underspend at this stage of the year. There will be some fluctuations on that between now and the end of March but that is what the forecast looks like



at this time. That is comprised of an underspend on the Force of around £700,000 and an overspend on the OPCC of around £200,000.

ITEM 7 – COLLABORATION

7.1 Risks and any key updates from the Force to OPCC if any

ITEM 8 – AOB

8.1 Information Management Updates

RG provided an update to the circumstances of Indie the dog.

GF advised that in terms of comms this is something we should have anticipated in regards to the backlash that has been received following the social media that was put out by the family. People with significant followings get tagged into these issues and which then go nationwide with very little local footprint, impact or consequence but they become nationally significant very quickly.

Next Meeting: 31st March 2022