



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

22nd September 2022

Attending:	Festus Akinbusoye, Police Crime Commissioner - OPCC (FA)
	Dan Vajzovic, Acting Deputy Chief Constable (DV)
	Trevor Rodenhurst, Acting 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)
	Rachel Glendenning, Staff Officer - Force (RG)
	Gavin Chambers, Chief Finance Officer – OPCC (GC)
	Gemma McCormack, Executive Assistant – OPCC (GM)

ITEM 1 - WELCOME & MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AND FOR AGREEMENT AND MATTERS ARISING

FA welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies from Wayne Humberstone and Garry Forsyth. FA advised that today is GF's last day as Chief Constable and as of Monday the 26th TR will be Acting Chief Constable and DV Acting Deputy Chief Constable.

FA thanked the Force for the excellent job with supporting the funeral of the late Queen Elizabeth both in London and those who stayed behind.

FA asked regarding the backfilling into ERSOU due to some of the changes that are taking place, TR advised that a lot of the changes will not happen until quarter 4 due to the difficulties in releasing resources. The rules of engagement set by the Home Office are for this to be in place by the 1st of April 2023. DV reported that as of the end of the financial year ERSOU will be at full strength across the ROCU and CT side, all 7 Chief Constables and 7 Deputy Chief Constables have been updated with the progress made so far, this financial year. Back in April we were predicting that it would be quite difficult to recruit into ERSOU, however we have 36 Officers in the pipeline who have been through the recruitment process but not yet released from their Force position. Will Henley who is working on this project Nationally from the NPCC has provided high levels of assurance in respect of the Eastern Region which is doing reasonably well. TR is the National lead of the ROCU's and the uplift into them. FA asked in terms of backfilling in senior

leadership, are all the roles in ERSOU filled? DV advised we have appointed with agreement from all 7 Chief Constables across the region – Simon Parkes is taking on the role of temporary ACC and we are now in the process of running a similar process backfill in-behind Simon’s role. FA asked for the PCCs in the other areas to be informed of these changes.

The minutes of the previous meeting were discussed and agreed as an accurate record.

ITEM 2- OPCC QUESTIONS OR ITEMS TO RAISE

2.1 Actions from Previous Meeting

31 – Young people in custody – SB advised this is an ongoing piece of work and SB will be attending the next children’s strategic board meeting, which is this afternoon, this will be raised again at the meeting. SB advised this is in relation to accommodation placements and out of custody provision. **Action to remain open.**

125 – Victims surveys and QR codes – SB advised that this update will be on the Agenda in October. **Action to remain open.**

126 – This will be discussed at the meeting today with further updates on the Agenda in October.

2.2 Information Document

KB confirmed that both reports have been received to cover both meetings that were missed in July and August and thanked RG and SB for providing this information.

2.3 S.I.O Report and amendments needed from the Force.

KB attended a Home Office briefing regarding how the National priorities information should be published as at the moment we are publishing text however; best practice shows that we need to be presenting in a different way. All of the Forces need to be doing this moving forward. KB has included in the report how Avon and Somerset are presenting their information to make the Force Exec team aware and by October we need to be showing how we are presenting the National information. FA advised he is grateful for the amount of information Force Exec are providing as this supports with FA’s engagement with the public.

FA is concerned about the format in which it is presented as it is very text heavy. Avon and Somerset have been highlighted as the best in the country on how their information is presented. FA has met with the new Policing Minister, Jeremy Quin, Jeremy is looking to come to Bedfordshire in November/December, and he is keen to see what we are doing around technology.

RG clarified it is in relation to the performance data in relation to crime figures, the performance team can support with getting this data in the right format.



Action: Leanne Greenacre, SB, KB and RG to have a meeting to discuss how to present this data and agree the format.

ITEM 3 – PERFORMANCE FOCUS

3.1 Crime Performance Figures with Restricted Details

SB advised that there were some incorrect figures in the performance figure on the tab called 'victim based crime' for example, Homicide – we were shown as being ranked 41st for our solved rate and charged rate showing a 0% charge rate, this was inaccurate and was in fact 70% and we were at 20. Revised version has now been sent out.

Neighbourhood crime, we see a 40% reduction of neighbourhood crime against the pre covid measured baseline.

Serious youth violence, we have seen countywide reductions since May and this comes at a time of the summer programme and a whole series of interventions that we had put in. The last two months – July and August, we have seen levels lower than pre pandemic. In August despite Bedford and Central Bedfordshire seeing reductions, Luton did see a slight increase but this is 'other violence' as opposed to 'guns and knives'.

Recorded crime is up again for the third month in a row with 4,521 crimes on average per month, this is up on the last two years but lower than pre covid times. The solved rate has risen again for the third consecutive month, if we see this for one extra month it will see up improve at National level which is positive.

Domestic abuse recorded crime continues to rise and the solved rate for August was up as well but lower than previous years, where we have seen reductions in the outcomes, 15 and 16 relate to evidential difficulties and victims not engaging – they have decreased which is good in terms of victim engagement.

Although we have seen a slightly lower number of recorded rapes in August, that is because in preceding months we did see disproportion increases, whilst we have seen a slight reduction in outcomes, we do still sit healthy in terms of 8th Nationally and 1st within our MSF in terms of outcomes.

Burglary residential continues to be a good news story, year to date 105 fewer victims of burglary residential compared last year, although August did see a slight increase, this still remains low compared to previous years. Outcomes are still positive and we are sitting 4th Nationally in terms of those outcomes.

Victim satisfaction – month on month we are seeing increased use of the surveys, in August we completed 48 surveys but we are still in the pilot phase to make sure the data is accurate. Out of the 48, 24 were satisfied and 24 were not satisfied and each are broken down and fed back to Officers and teams.



In terms of Custody there is a slight increase in authorised detentions but a noticeable drop in waiting times and those refused, a drop in the number of children detained but all other measures remain stable.

FA asked regarding the victim satisfaction data, this has more than doubled from 19 in April to 48 in August, is there a new system in place for capturing data? SB advised that this has been reported on for a number of months where we went to an automated survey which is sent out to victims of crime, it has been in place for a few months but we are at the pilot stage in terms of making sure it is accurate and that we are getting the right people. We started with residential burglary then increased it to include vehicle crime, then increased to personal robbery. The survey is sent out via text message or email automatically but we are restricted by how many people complete the survey and return it to us.

FA asked regarding the youth violence in Luton, what kind of issues are we seeing there? SB advised that there are more hot spot areas in Luton as opposed to Bedford and Central Bedfordshire areas, it is a combination of gang related but also isolated incidents as well. When looking at serious youth violence the three main areas are gun crime, knife crime and then other violence. It's the other violence where we are seeing an increase, this could be assaults but it is captured under the 'other violence' banner.

FA asked how well the partnership is working with the Local Authorities, CSP's etc? SB advised the Force are supporting Luton Borough Council with some activity in the town centre, in Bedford we have always had good relationships in the town centre in terms of visibility and presence but the Hub will provide additional presence in terms of foot patrol and they will be focussed in town centres who can then work with the CSP's and the Neighbourhood Enforcement Teams.

3.2 Operational Priorities Presentation

SB went through the presentation.

The data referred to in the presentation was commissioned from the 5th September and includes August data. We took into account the information received from the HMIC inspection and also the Police and Crime Plan.

The current position in the control room in terms of staffing, we are trying to combine a number of elements – access of service and investment into technology. One of the issues we face at this time is getting people in place in the control room. Within the control room we have a full complement of Oscar 1's and Oscar 2's, in terms of Call Handling Supervisors – the full FTE required is 4 and currently we only have 1, we have recruited 3 and they will start on the 1st October. In terms of Radio Agents the FTE should be 54 and we currently have 32, we currently have 9 in training currently. We took the



decision to invest within the room and have 12 Police Officers, currently we only have 2 within there with 10 vacancies, this does cause conflicting issues of where we need these Officers to be i.e. response drivers, we need to have them in response. In relation to call handling, we currently have 8 vacancies and projected another 4. In terms of our Project Contact Trainers we have another 2 vacancies there.

We have a crime bureau function which sits behind and processes a lot of the crime that comes through, this is where we see another significant gap. We have 22 vacancies within the crime bureau and that has a huge impact in terms of data quality but also processing reports that become fit for other teams.

We have changed our recruitment provider and have kept our recruitment window open.

This report was produced in September in good time for this meeting and some of this has been superseded, SB will report at future meetings. We had Radio Agent assessment dates on the 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th September where there were 74 candidates, there were Call Handler assessment dates on the 15th, 16th 17th and 18th September where we had 82 candidates. Assessments for those within the Crime Bureau are to be set but we have 52 candidates there. The next scheduled training for when we take on these staff is scheduled for October. This will be updated month on month on what this looks like.

TR advised when the Gold Group was started in January the pipeline was very fragile, the numbers of people applying for those roles were very low, it has taken quite a lot of time to get the attraction right but we have given equal priority to the control room as we have with the uplift of Police Officers. SB updated that the Superintendent and Chief Inspector were changed and we have identified the control room is one of the primary areas of the organisation and this is where we should be putting some of our best people. It is also an area where gold and silver commanders are in there everyday as it is acknowledged that it is a priority for the organisation. SB and TR have both sensed a change in mood and culture in the control room which is very positive, staff are feeling heard and listened to, they are getting training and communication both ways has improved.

SB advised the other contributing factor is demand and in August we have seen 12,202 calls that have come into the room, that is slightly down from July which sat at 13,000 but that is the highest for the last 12 months. This illustrates the number of calls and demand that are coming into the room and this is the same for 101's. We haven't seen this level of calls coming into 101 since October 2021. We have seen some improvement for example incidents and attendance – 68% of those 999 calls are answered within 10 seconds and that is an improving picture for us as a Force. We are also seeing slight improvement



month on month in terms of the journey of a call. The other area of demand we have to take into consideration is the number of the calls that come in and then are determined to require an immediate response, on average everyday in August we had 133 incidents that required an immediate response, this is the highest since October 2021. We have seen 67% of those incidents attended within 12 minutes from the call. We are making improvements as a Force but we know we still have a long way to go. We have response who respond to incidents and a response investigation team that then take on investigations.

We currently have 310 student officers within the organisation which is a huge number. There have been meetings with the students and have received feedback from them in terms of their journey, following this we have made changes on how we address and deal with those elements. On the 3rd October our response investigation function and response teams will come together and have patrol teams, those teams will not just attend and respond to incidents but they will retain those investigations of a lower level and complete that investigation. This also helps the skills of our Officers but also helps with more responsibility and ownership on the Officer on the case and a better focus on victim care, that should then lead onto an improved quality of service that we provide.

Retention of Police Officers is another area in the Police and Crime Plan and is important to the Force. We listen to Officers who leave and ask the question on why they want to leave. The feedback has been that due to being moved around, they have not always been able to cement their skills, lose those skills when they get moved to other teams and then have to relearn what they are doing. The focus has been on the individual and what is best for that student. Culture, wellbeing and support features highly, when the Officers start they will come out of Dunstable training and go into a Hub. The Student Hub will be live from the 3rd October and the first cohort that go into there is a cohort of 7 on the 13th October. The Hub will consist of 1 Inspector, 6 Sergeants and to start with 7 Student Constables – who will have dedicated tutorship. That Hub will give them skills and experience that they will need going forward. Part of the activity in the Hub will be foot patrols within the town centre and foot patrols around our community hub as well, there will also be an opportunity to respond to incidents. The Hub will also align to the patrol function with a 4 on 4 off shift pattern. Once they leave the Hub they will go on to a patrol section where the day to day supervision will be with the Sergeant within the patrol team. The academic work linked to their portfolio will remain within the student hub. The Force have reached out to all of the Forces with similar models who have received negative feedback from the HMIC and SB has spoken with Neil Monk who is the Force



lead from HMIC where concerns have been addressed in terms of Neil's observations with the other Forces.

FA asked regarding the students who are going to be in the student hub, will they be aligned to response, community etc? SB advised they will be working a 4 on 4 off shift pattern but they will have the flexibility to change some of the shifts according to what is best to the student. They will carry a caseload and be able to respond to incidents as well. SB advised there will be two Hubs which will be based at Kempston HQ and Luton HQ.

TR advised that there is a nervousness about this change, we need to do it and it is the only way of providing and knowing we have enough drivers to respond to calls and have enough pastoral care for our students. We will support them to do this but there will be some concerns that are being raised. FA emphasised he fully supports the Force with this change and will support in anyway.

TR advised the Amazon Chatbot goes live next month in the Control Room which takes over the webchat for all Police Forces. A separate briefing and demonstration will be provided for FA.

Action: GM to arrange with PW for a Chatbot demonstration.

ITEM 4 – CC UPDATES

4.1 Verbal Opportunity for CC to Raise Items to the OPCC

TR shared following the HMIC inspection, there are only 4 other Forces better than Bedfordshire Nationally in terms of overall grading however there is grading that is due out next month, we are looking at being at least 'good' for serious and organised crime, this may give the opportunity to give good promotion about the service the Force is providing.

The NPCC lead for the plan of action on race visited the Force and the Force presented all of the things that are being done across the whole spectrum of the plan and how we propose to take the plan forward. Bedfordshire was described by the NPCC lead as 'an ice breaker Force' in terms of where we are in leading the way on the delivery of the Race Action Plan and wider culture piece. There is a wider session on Monday which has been organised for Chief Constables.

Operation London Bridge – The Force provided everything that was asked in terms of mutual aid which ranges from close protection firearms officers, search officers right through to 2 individuals who took part in the parade. This is a significant commitment from



a Force the size of Bedfordshire – 43, and we did that without any impact on service delivery and we have received a lot of thanks for our part in what was a historic policing event.

FA advised that he has been mindful of the situation in Leicester, are there any concerns of any contagion in Bedfordshire? TR advised the Force continues to monitor this on a daily basis, it has spread and we have seen some issues in Birmingham and Slough. Bedfordshire are not seeing the same problems, some of the issues driving the Leicester behaviour do not exist in our communities. Bedfordshire also have the Cohesion Team and they are monitoring this on a daily basis. There was one individual from Luton who was arrested in Leicester, we are looking into any connections, but we are keeping the whole situation under close watch.

ITEM 5 – LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE

5.1 Chief Constable Complaints

KB reported no concerns.

5.2 Reviews

KB reported no concerns.

5.3 Cultural Update

TR advised the Force continues the culture project and there have been some changes since we last met at this board. The Force have appointed a dedicated DI Manager – Rachel Philpott, there have also been appointments for Supervisor and 5 to lead on the above difference and cultural training which is being rolled out across the whole Force, this is in addition to the leadership sessions we have carried out with the above difference company.

Pillar leads for the Race Action Plan have now been appointed, we now have senior leaders driving forward all the elements of plan and working groups on each one of those, the diversity support group are engaged in all aspects of this.

We have a challenging issue that is being managed in JPS – armed policing, a particular conduct matter, they are now subject of bespoke sessions which we are going to participate in, this is a mini version of the Better for Beds but tailored to JPS.

5.4 Officer Retention & Support for Officers/Staff going through the Misconduct process

PW reported that Bedfordshire is required to end up with a 1436 headcount by the 31st March 2023 to achieve uplift. We have gone back to the Home Office to advise that we will potentially exceed this, if we do the Home Office will provide us with additional funding to go 16 above that to get to 1452, the budget that was set and approved showed that we would get to 1456. The number of Officers that we have in is 1400 which means



we have 56 to recruit between now and the end of March 2023. Between April 2022 and September 2022 we should have recruited 91 people, we have actually recruited 51 people which is 56% of what we should have recruited. The main reasons for this is the market for Police Officers is quite saturated Nationally, locally which is Beds, Cambs, and Herts the confusion around PEQF and entry routes into policing has had a massive impact which is reflected in the first six months as they have all been PEQF intakes. We have had process issues around medicals, vetting and transactional elements of HR. At the moment if we carry on the level we are going at we will end up with 1440 which is way below but achieves uplift. We applied to the College of Policing around extending IPLDP which they granted until the 31st March 2023. The issue is that by the time they granted it to us, the only intakes we could convert into IPLDP or ADCP intakes were from December 2022 until March 2023. We have worked out that we need to have 650 applications by the end of this month.

We are now carrying out medicals more frequently and onsite. We have recruited locally 4 people who are there to be administrators to explain to people that have applied, where they are in the process, we are already seeing a better return rate on applications as a result of those starting. On a weekly basis we are reviewing everyone who is in vetting on the basis that we can advise on who to focus on, this is due to the demand in vetting across Beds, Herts and Cambs. Everything we are doing to maximise the recruitment line is being done. The attrition is an area of concern as we are losing around 13 Officers per month, that majority of those are people in their first 2 years service. We are also seeing through the Durham survey that the morale issues affecting our Officers go off the scale for those officers that are aged between one year and two years in service.

We have put in lots of things around pathway discussions, focussed on the areas people have told us why they are leaving. We believe by created the Student Hub where the Officers will have less rotation, single ownership and governance, we will see a better rate of attrition. We are trying to get from 13 leaving a month to around 8, this wont happen over the next few months but this is something we are monitoring. Ill health retirement is also something we need to keep an eye on, especially around PTSD. We are all working hard to deliver the 1456 and beyond this.

ITEM 6 – QUARTERLY REPORTING EFFICIENCY

6.1 2022/23 Budget Monitoring (revenue and capital).

PW updated that we are in a position at the moment where we are forecasting a 500k underspend on revenue, we do not know what the police staff pay award looks like as a result of the officer pay award, we don't yet fully know what the costs of Operation London Bridge are and what needs to be recouped or if we are going to have to fund them ourselves and we don't know the impact of energy costs for businesses. We need to keep in mind is that we are in the position at the moment due to the special grant for



BOSON and we have not gone back to the Policing Minister to explain how reliant Bedfordshire are on that grant, whilst we are still waiting for a funding formula we still need to wait for that grant.

Action: PW to provide FA with information regarding the special grant and PCC to write to the Policing Minister.

GC updated regarding the potential gap of 2.2 for when we set the budget for next year, precept pressures etc. The Police and Crime Panel are seeking some information in regards to what progress is being made in terms of reaching those figures. GC and PW are working together in relation to the report for Police and Crime Panel.

6.2 Estates Strategy and Update

To be moved to October meeting.

6.3 Proceeds of Crime Report

To be moved to October meeting.

ITEM 7 – COLLABORATION

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

TR advised that he has no real concerns around the areas that we are responsible for. In ERSOU and JPS there are some resourcing challenges, we are trying to rectify that and do have some transferees coming into JPS but TR did not have any concerns to raise at this time.

ITEM 8 – AOB

8.1 Information Management Updates

KB updated there are no concerns about the report.

8.2 Vetting – Serious Concerns re: Delays

AV asked regarding the review of chief officer progression paper that is going to the NPCC, could we have some reassurance that TR is happy with what the College of Policing is trying to achieve with that and, whether or not if there are going to be any issues with getting that paper and any recommendations through the other CC's at Chiefs Council? TR advised we are supportive of the current position of the PNAC and SCC doesn't work as it does not give us the answer and therefore there needs to be change.



The changes being proposed feel like they are in the right direction and being brought in quickly and therefore, we are going to work with the College to try and influence that, there is an acceptance that there needs to be a change.

AV updated that there has been an ask from the Home Office of policing rural areas, FA advised that this is something that he had drafted and sent to GF.

Next Meeting: 20th October 2022