



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

31st March 2022

Attending:	Festus Akinbusoye, Police Crime Commissioner - OPCC (FA)
	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)
	Gavin Chambers, Chief Finance Officer – OPCC (GC)
	Madelyn Doggrell, Staff Officer – Force (MD)
	Leanne Friel, Communication Officer – OPCC (LF)

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

FA welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies from GF and PW. The minutes of the previous meeting were discussed, GC advised on page 9 Cyro is written twice and should be spelt Siro. The amendment will be made and the minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

ITEM 2- OPCC QUESTIONS OR ITEMS TO RAISE

2.1 Actions from Previous Meeting

31 – TR advised this is an ongoing conversation and something that we need to keep pressing on and is also something that needs to be raised at the Criminal Justice Board Meeting. FA advised that he had previously requested from GF the number of hours spent by Officers dealing with mental health patients for the last year, also the amount of time spent with young people in Custody. It would be good to have this figure to be able to put it in the public domain where necessary. TR agreed that this is a gap as there is no secure accommodation in the County for a young person so the alternative is to release them inappropriately or keep them in Custody which is not appropriate for their age. FA advised that he has requested this information as the public are not aware that the Officers are having to deal with this and it is not appreciated on how much time this consumes.

TR shared that they will look into getting this information ready for the next Criminal Justice Board Meeting. SB updated in terms of progress and advised that having spoken with Marcel this will be a priority for the Director of Children Services when she starts. They have already put a Task and Finish Group underneath so that Practitioners can outlay exactly what the issues are. SB shared



that although this action focusses on Children in Custody, the other element is linked to the EDT provision and whereby Officers are disproportionately used to look after children because of others. FA advised that the one that will cause the most action would be EDT having to plug the gap and look after these children. SB shared there is an EDT Working Group whereby we feed that into but the question should be asked at Criminal Justice Board as to where it feeds in there. **Action – Officer figures to be provided for Criminal Justice Board on the 12th May 2022.**

98 – TR advised that there was an issue with the system but this has now been overcome and the Officers photographs are now being taken by Corporate Comms, they are being uploaded to the system and TR has a high level of confidence that this has been resolved. FA asked in terms of contact details and what information should be made available? TR advised that we are providing the Officers name, photograph and contact details for the Hub as this is being monitored by whoever is on duty so there will always be a quick response. TR shared that the Local Inspectors information should also be on there as well as they should be attending the Priority Setting Meetings and have already relationships with the local Councillors, Town and Parish Councils etc.

110 – **To Remain Open.**

116 – TR shared that PW believes that this was completed at the last meeting. GC advised that this still needs to be actioned and was a specific request from one of the Panel members and needs to come back to the OPCC. FA confirmed that the Panel would like to see a breakdown of the efficiency savings that we made mention of. AV shared that GF was going to speak about this in his address to the Panel on Tuesday but it is not yet known whether he will be able to attend as he is currently on sick leave. TR advised that PW is currently on annual leave but we will do our best to provide a paper for the Panel. GC advised that he will discuss this with Stuart Goodwin in PW's absence. FA asked regarding the current vetting capacity and what is being done with that? TR shared that at the last BCH Chief Officer Board the update was that they will be sending a paper and proposal from vetting to the next meeting which is on Tuesday, TR is anticipating that this will outline a gap in capacity and will be asking for investment. This will be discussed further at the meeting on Tuesday where decisions will be made on how we can fill those gaps. In the meantime, the Head of PSD, Martin, is being helpful if we have a specific ask they are doing their best to accommodate this.

2.2 Safer Streets

FA thanked RG and KB for their work on this as it has not been easy providing the information that was not mandatory information but FA thanked both for your team work on this. KB advised that this information will be available on the Website after the meeting today, once everyone has agreed that they are happy with the document. FA stated 'I love it, it is just perfect'. FA stated that hopefully it will achieve its aim in reducing the amount of FOI (Freedom of Information) requests that we get because this does have some really useful information in terms of trend and performance generally.



2.3 Transparency Report

KB updated that the only concerns that have been raised throughout the report is the Customer Services. FA stated that he is critically worried about this having been looking at it for the past year. FA had a meeting with Steve Ashdown in July last year where FA viewed some of the data and feedback that the public were giving us, from that FA assumed that everything was going to get better.

SB shared that we have the dissatisfaction element of complaints that come in, for February there were only 23 reports of dissatisfaction and the vast majority of those were delivery of duties and service. When you break those down a lot are them due to people not being happy that an individual was not charged, that is an element of an outcome where its not that they are not happy with the service, they are not happy that the information is not available. Of those 23, 11 of those were victims of crime and each is picked up and reviewed individually. There were 2 for discrimination and both automatically go to PSD for review to see what they are and whether they need further investigation. In relation to the Teams itself, they have an FTE of 18, there is only 13 in there at the moment and there is an advert going out for further recruitment. This is also impacted by 2 members of staff on maternity leave and 2 on long term sick. We do have a new manager starting in that team on the 19th April 2022, they are an external person who will hopefully bring in a fresh pair of eyes and be given the direction in terms of where we want to go. We do provide a service at both sites, including the Enquiry Office, Monday to Friday fully open and at weekends by intercom. In terms of the complaints, if it is a matter of the number, we have seen fewer dissatisfaction reports come in, if it's a matter of the content and the nature of the complaint, that is a different matter again.

FA advised that his concern is not so much about the number of complaints coming in, as that would be a function of what Officers are doing out there, FA's concern is more of how they are being dealt with. There is still a huge reliance on the Officers themselves processing and progressing the work as they come in and I am not certain what the Team themselves actually do. Do we have a timeline or journey map of when someone calls in, how many days or hours until someone replies to them, what can we expect to be done by day one, day three, day seven etc and, if an Officer is on leave or off sick what happens and who communicates that with the complainant? At the moment FA is not sure that is happening and what we have in place to deal with this?

SB agreed that there will be delays in there but these needs to be balance according to the days. One day SB went in to dip sample and check the inbox and it was clear, there will be days where they can deal with everything in one day yet on another, there will be backlogs. What we would ask is for this matter to be reviewed by the new Manager when she comes in, for a plan to be put in place and for us to come back and update in the future in terms of what that progress looks like. At the moment we have done an idle dive into the nature of the complaint, what we haven't done is go into the process and that is where there may be some gaps.

KB advised that there is a concern about how it is being recorded as when we have completed the dip sampling the data hasn't been reliable. KB feels there is definitely a training need within that team on how they communicate, how they log things. There have been a number of issues we have been raising over the past 6 – 8 months but there is still the same issue moving forward. PSD also



complete dip sampling and they are coming back with the same data about how complaints are being responded to. It is not about the number of complaints being received it is about the service that the complainant gets if they are not getting acknowledgement within a month. TR agreed that we all recognise that the service isn't at the level that we would want it to be. Given the knowledge that KB and her team has on it and the new manager starting, there is a short term option for sharing that information with that individual and having a focus to the here and now. FA advised that he is coming into his first year as PCC and hasn't seen a real significant improvement, FA completely understand the pressures within that team but feels that trying to do something different with the same team and the same model, doesn't really inspire FA. Even though we have a new manager coming in it might be to do with the processes that we have in place. AV stated that we can make some changes to any of the processes, and we will be able to make improvements within this space with a new manager and some training etc.

Action – AV, TR, SB and GF to have a meeting to discuss Model 2.

ITEM 3 – PERFORMANCE FOCUS

3.1 Crime Performance Figures with Restricted Detail

SB updated regarding Custody, in February we have seen a reduction in the throughput across both sites but nothing that causes concern. Although we have had fewer people coming into Custody, the waiting time across both sites has gone up but that is due to the resilience and staffing issues within the team, they are under resourced at the moment because of Detention Officer capacity. In terms of children detained in February, that is consistent with the previous two months and is back to normal levels after a peak at the end of last year. The number of children detained overnight has gone up but is within average levels across both sites and what we have to remember is, there are some 16 year olds who commit very serious offences and are rightly detained. All children that are detained are reviewed over the course of the night and again at 8.30pm when we have an evening meeting. We have had an increase in no further action of those coming through Custody but they are in relation to the RUI and other disposal elements.

Strip Searches, we have a rolling 13 month on this and it breaks it down by age. For 10 – 17 year olds who were searches within Custody environment, there were low levels and this can be broken down by age, ethnicity and gender.

FA asked if we have any records of strip searches being done by our Officers outside of Police premises? RG confirmed that there are strip searches that are carried out in Custody which is authorised by a Custody Sergeant, this is normally when someone is booked in for a variety of reasons, there is also Section 1 whereby we can strip search somebody. There has been occasions, in the last 2 years we have done 18 Section 1 strip searches on individuals aged between 14 – 17 and a few of those were conducted at other places for example, home addresses whereby an appropriate adult is present or at a Police premises. FA asked if any have been done without an adult or appropriate person present? RG advised that all were completed with an adult/appropriate person present. RG shared that when someone is strip searched under Section 1 then this has to be authorised by a Sergeant, when in Custody the Custody Sergeant has to authorise but when outside of Custody you have to have a conversation with your Supervisor as to who will then authorise that



search. RG confirmed that 18 searches have been carried out between the 28th March 2020 – 30th March 2022, out of those 18 there were 17 males and 1 female. FA asked if we have any complaints about strip searches? RG advised that there are none that we are aware of but the way we record complaints are in relation to the conduct and not the actual incident. We could run a search in relation to keyword but that depends on data quality and may take a little bit of time. FA advised that the last set of data he received in relation to strip searches from January to January only had for ages 18 and upwards so there were no figures for under 18's. AV advised that there seems to be some confusion about what stop and search is and what strip searches are, is there something on the Force website that points people in the right direction that we can then refer people to?

Action: TR advised he will ask Ian Taylor to look into this and ensure the information is clear and correct. KB will liaise with IT regarding the information.

SB advised in relation to general crime we have seen reported crime in rape, SSO and stalking and harassment continue to increase which is a good sign in terms of a sense of trust and confidence within our community to report. Recorded crime in neighbourhood crime in line with the National Crime and Policing Measures continues to decrease year to date however we still see some challenges in terms of our solved crime which has decreased year to date. Charge summons however has gone down in February so that is an indicator of why that year to date figure has gone down. We have seen improvement in Outcome 16 as we want to see that going down because the nature of the outcome which is positive. DA crime remains stable, further improvement in terms of our solved rate for DA and DA repeats remain lower than the previous year. Rape reports are still up on last year but we continue to have really good outcomes as solved rate shows as second only to Notts in our most similar Force. We have seen 315 fewer victims of residential burglaries this year compared to last year and positively we are seeing an increase in our solved rate. Beds is the strongest performing Force against our most similar Forces and from the latest data we are just quality assuring it suggests we are 3rd Nationally in terms of our solved outcomes for burglary residential. When we have our end of year data we will be able to see where we are as there are certain trends we see in different areas month on month. FA stated that if this turns out to be the case then that is a fantastic achievement.

SB shared that one of our greatest challenges is neighbourhood crime. There is something in the National domain that suggests Bedfordshire has some excellent practice in relation to thefts from person and SB would treat that with some caution as we are just checking that data and commentary. TR advised that he is attending Kit's National Performance Board and in the overall report that is going to be presented to him there we are highlighted as good from theft from person which TR didn't think we were and have asked SB to look into this. SB shared that the theft from person to date data shows we have had 414 reported and 4 solved.

SB shared that we have a huge emphasis on serious violence and we have seen reductions again, the only area bucking the trend is Central Bedfordshire, the good news is other violence as opposed to knives and guns. We are doing a lot of work in that area, in particular the TREE project which is linked to the VERU and Sparkler. On Monday we had a visit from the Home Office and they wanted to focus on our response to serious violence, we had 2 hours with them and SB hosted a briefing



and discussion time and in the afternoon they went out with some of our proactive patrols, within an hour one of the group were involved with a foot chase and arrest of an individual within CBC. We split up the 7 different Home Office staff into cohorts and during the time they were out witnessed and were party to three separate arrests. SB has since received an email from Rachel who sits just below the Policing Minister, commending us on our presentation and the activity that our team do.

SB advised in terms of general performance, some of our greatest challenges for this County are 10 mapped gangs, 34 live OCG (Organised Crime Gangs), 6 priority individuals, we have 19 county line groups that operate 55 lines and 4 exporting groups within 11 lines. In terms of our teams RASSO are up against it with caseloads because of the demand that is coming in but in general, because of the push we have had, we have reduced the assigned crimes that the overall workforce holds and by default reduced outstanding suspects.

VCOP and supervisory reviews are again around the 80% mark which is good news in terms of how our supervisors are supervising crimes and how our Officers are updating victims.

Operationally, we have the Commonwealth Games but our requirement for that has been reduced significantly which helps us a lot as we have events within the County that we will have to police; the Luton Carnival, Bedford River Festival and as the football season comes to an end our response to that is greater as well simply because of the nature of the games and our importance there.

3.2 File Quality for CPS

SB advised that he has submitted a paper but shared that he wont go into too much details as feels that this sits within the Criminal Justice Board. FA asked if we have the File Quality Management Team in place yet? SB confirmed that we currently have in place a Supervisor and 6, 4 more applicants going through vetting and HR process. They are in place and already making a difference and as soon as we overcome vetting we will be fully established.

3.3 FCC Report (Action from November 2021)

SB updated regarding some of the headlines from within the report.

The reports details the position regarding vacancies and there are still significant vacancies within the team across all areas. We have changed the recruitment provider and that has improved the number of applications that we are getting and we have another course set for later on this month and we should be able to see some of that transition in terms of getting those staff back up and back up to position. We need to be aware though that they have just finished their consultation period which has an impact on staff but what we are hearing from those people is that it hasn't had too much of an impact because they have read between the lines in terms of what it actually means to them as individuals. The National data will show calls answered within 10 seconds, calls answered between 10 – 60 seconds and then calls answered greater than 60 seconds. That documents shows that we are bearing less well than our neighbours in Cambs and Herts. The first data will be published in May 2022 and we are not aware if this will be a rolling figure. TR advised that the next Gold Group is tomorrow, TR is chairing this Group as there is concern about the FCC and the pressures that are in there due to being understrength and the demand that is in there remains consistently high. The Gold Group is there to try and ease the short term pressure and to try and



free up any organisational barriers etc. The short term is looking at things like getting people in, getting the recruitment right, getting training etc completed quickly. We have applicants seeking to transfer to us from the Met, we have a professional agency who specialises in recruiting, we have enhanced the pay of the radio agents but we do also have some leavers. Some of those leavers are moving from being Police Staff Operatives to Constables and part of what we do here in Beds is encourage people to be able to move about the system and progress their careers which is a good thing. Whilst that is causing a pressure it is keeping good people within our organisation. We will see where we are tomorrow and seek to make any short term interventions to try and ease some of those pressures while we wait for the more longer term solutions to come in. We did agree that there were going to be 20 Officers in there, 2 have been identified and have a date, its not the ideal number but TR is keen that we have people who have asked to go in there rather than posting them there. RG identified another person yesterday who had reached out to her. John Murphy is involved with agreeing the date when they can start as they are response Officers from his team, this will cause pressures in that team but they are looking at a date in June for two of the Officers.

SB reinforced that our issue in regards to response drivers should not be diminished in any way because we need response driver out there to respond to these incidents. TR also mentioned the Amazon solution that we are currently working on which will be a first for policing as it will take through automation the demand out of the system before it even hits the room and we are already trailing some of that.

ITEM 4 – CC UPDATES

4.1 Verbal Opportunity for CC to Raise Items to the OPCC

TR advised that by the next meeting the HMIC report will be out which will be a great opportunity for FA to feedback some positive messages to the community. We are confident that the report will be out by the 14th April 2022.

TR advised that one area that is acutely under pressure from the asset vs demand shortfall is Emerald and what we were able to agree for the rest of this financial year to put in some PIP 2 Investigators provided by an external company called Red Snapper. We have been able to support that at a cost of £500,000 for this coming financial year that whilst we seek to improve the throughput of individuals through the training detectives programme. FA asked if we are still averaging around 700 referrals a month? TR agreed that demand is still high.

Culture update, The Be You Strategy came from the culture survey that was sent out two years ago. Since then we have been updating on the things that we have been doing such as the briefing meetings, Better 4 Beds Days starting next month for the whole workforce, Above Difference working with our staff and given the level of effort and focus we have got we are repeating the culture survey to see what it will tell us. We will report back on that when we have the results in the near future.

4.2 Police uplift programme and NPCC DEI Coordination committee letter – re Bedfordshire Data Quality Update

TR advise this is in relation to the letter we received about our data quality, this was around the self-defined gender identity of our workforce. The issue with that is we had a system at one point that



didn't enable you to record that, we have changed the system and this now enable us to record this information but it is voluntary and therefore in relation to that I have done a Safe to Say campaign which is to disclose all of your identifying characteristics, it is important for us to know, we are going to use the PDR process and we are about to start next years PDR's. The Home Office put at the bottom of their emails 'Identifies as' and this is something else that we may seek to use.

SB updated that the ethnicities and other required characteristics of those convicted of child abuse following a recommendation, this is whereby we undertook a dip sample of 100 people that were charged with child sex abuse tags on them. What we have found there is there are two elements; self defined and officer defined and unfortunately the data quality isn't brilliant as officer defined, of those 100 dip sampled we found 17 that were not stated. We have looked into that and found that this is not a mandated field within Athena, we are going to go into the Regional Athena groups and see if we can make those changes to make it mandated so that Officers cannot bypass that without completing and also, the vast majority of Officers will use Two-Serve so we can mandate that within there to make sure that they complete that. This will form part of our Data Quality Board which is chaired by Nick Bellingham and they will be seeking to continually dip sample to make sure that we address that issue.

4.3 PCC Enquiries specifically for the CC

SB updated regarding the domestic homicide reviews and advised that is a process run by the CSP's whereby if we have had a domestic homicide then the CSP can instigate a domestic homicide review which is independently chaired by from a policing perspective. The purpose is about improving the response to domestic abuse, learning and how we can prevent such tragedies occurring again. We as a County have very few domestic homicide reviews and the last one that we had was in 2020 and this occurred in the South of the County, The only recommendation that came out of that is that policing should review the Domestic Abuse Training that its personnel get. The training that we delivery is reviewed on a regular basis, even more so because of the number of new recruits, high turnover of our staff etc. We have got a round of Domestic Abuse Matters Training throughout all our frontline which is scheduled to be delivered by Save Lives in May/June 2022.

TR updated regarding the current PC to Sergeant supervision ratio and shared that we have run our reports and said that it depends on what team it is, if you are Response it is about 1:10, as you move through specialism and complexity within the Organisation that ratio reduced, for example child protection is 1:5. It isn't the same anywhere within the organisation but as we are acutely aware of how the workforce is changing and growing, Sergeants is now something we are looking at in terms of uplift and how we might need to increase them. We have already increased the establishment by 8 Inspectors and that is because the frontline is increasing in order to maintain rations and in some instances, provide some extra leadership. FA asked what criteria is used to decide who becomes promoted to a Sergeant? TR advised that they have to pass the Sergeants exam and once passed they can then go for the Sergeants process which is the same process for everyone and that involves a professional discussion, a year long programme with evidence of work to show they are competent in the role. SB added in terms of our younger Officers, there is a student development unit that supports student officers as well and then in the wider environment we have dedicated wellbeing officers and support functions so the Sergeants are alone in supporting them.



<u>ITEM 5 – LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE</u>
5.1 Chief Constable Complaints
KB advised there are no concerns.
5.2 Reviews
KB advised the only comment would be around some Officers taking a long period of time to respond to the OPCC with questions surrounding reviews and also, Customer Service/PSD are sending complaints to Officers that are on long term sick leave and that is also shown in the customer service dip sampling. TR advised that if any Officers are not responding in a timely manner to let MD know who the Officers are.
<u>ITEM 6 – QUARTERLY REPORTING EFFICIENCY</u>
Nothing to report.
<u>ITEM 7 – COLLABORATION</u>
7.1 Risks and any key updates from the Force to OPCC if any
<p>TR advised for the Regional Collaboration we have delivered the eastern regions uplift requirement and had that not been achieved across all 7 Forces there would have been a penalty so that is good news.</p> <p>We are looking at the service level of HR and ICT and we are going to have a discussion with the other two Forces on Tuesday as we are going to suggest a consultancy to come in to deliver the PBB service levels setting that we have done across all the units in Bedfordshire as we want to know our service levels but that is a 3 Force decision.</p> <p>FA advised regarding the Estates Review and shared that he spoke with PW who advised that he will have some reports for us that he will share in April.</p> <p>AV updated that Karena is moving on from her role and just wanted to note a huge thank you for the work she has done supporting a range of initiatives, for AV she has been the glue that has stuck all of those pieces of work together and her replacement Kat, who is coming from Thames Valley Police, I am really hopeful that this role will not see that churn of Senior Officers that we have seen in recent times so that we can get some stability and that some of the things that had been stuck can keep on moving. TR advised that Karena is moving into the JPS ACC role for the next three months as Jackie is imminently retiring. We should note at this meeting that Jackie Sebire is retiring and she has done a brilliant job as the previous ACC in Bedfordshire and more recently as the ACC for JPS. AV advised that we will be planning something for Jackie next month.</p>



ITEM 8 – AOB

8.2 Custody Opening

RG updated that the Custody opening Ceremony will be on the 21st April 2022, we are going to start at 11am with a small group of individuals who have been invited to have a tour of the building prior to the official opening. We are then having a reception at 2pm which will be in the Conference Room in the new building. RG advised that we are not publicising this event pre the event but does FA want Corporate Comms to be there for the opening? FA agreed for them to be there and we can then decide what goes out after. RG advised that Corporate Comms will speak to someone from the media and bring them in as well.

GC advised in case FA is asked, this is a £20 million project.

AV updated regarding Section 7 and advised that discussions with the owners of the proposed firing range land continue.

AV advised that she was unable to attend the meeting yesterday where SB met with colleagues to discuss the VERU and asked for an update regarding structure and future funding? SB advised that he has not yet had an opportunity to update the CC and DCC yet and advised that he will update the PCC once he has had this discussion. SB shared that it was very productive, Stuart was there to speak about Finance, a Home Office representatives dialled in as well and we did discuss with them some of the ideas we have. FA shared that moving forward with the VERU and extra resources coming in, FA is currently working on getting a Common Framework agreed for all the schools in Bedfordshire in terms of how we deal with absence from school. Having spoken with the Missing Persons Team, often when they are given jobs from the Control Room of a missing person they have no idea what steps have been taken by the schools or anyone else before they get that job. We do know that every school has their own way of how they deal with a child absence from school and I am trying to ensure that across the board there is a minimum expectation of all the schools in terms of what to do when a child is absent. SB agreed that an Education Lead is one of the additional roles that we have considered and said this issue is also being discussed at the Pan Beds meeting.

TR shared regarding the VERU, the positive news is that we have three year funding which is enabling us to build specialism consider bolstering the leadership within the VERU so it is a positive story for the staff and community. AV asked as we cannot have the update now, for a written brief to be submitted to the PCC by the end of next week. FA advised if the Force is sighted on the Part 2 review of PCC's in relation to oversight of the VERU? SB agreed they are aware.

Next Meeting: 25th April 2022

