



## POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR BEDFORDSHIRE DELIVERY AND BEATING CRIME MINUTES – PART 2

**Monday 23 May 2022**

<b>Attending:</b>	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)
	Wayne Humberstone, Director of OCC Operations (WH)
	Katie Beaumont, Transparency Manager - OPCC (KB)
	Rachel Glendenning, Staff Officer - Force (RG)
	Gemma McCormack, Executive Assistant – OPCC (GM)

<b>ITEM 9 – OPCC UPDATES</b>
<b>9.1 PCC Updates</b>
<p>FA welcomed everyone to the open section of the meeting.</p> <p>FA shared that this section of the meeting is where FA engages with the CC to get regular updates on how well the Force are delivering on the Police and Crime Plan and also, to pass on the questions from members of the public. It is a good opportunity for FA to have a monthly update on the Force performance and today we have had an update on the Estates Strategy and also on File Quality, which is where Officers report and file files away to the CPS (Crown Prosecution Service).</p> <p>FA updated regarding the Youth Conference which was a real success. It was good to have students in Year 9 from schools across Central Bedfordshire, Bedford Borough and Luton come to Flitwick for the conference which was held over three days. It was very inspiring and uplifting and SB also attended to say a few words. FA thanked all the schools and teachers who were involved and also the OPCC office and the VERU (Violence and Exploitation Unit) with organising the event and we will be holding this event again next year.</p>
<b>9.2 Force Activity Against the Police and Crime Plan</b>
<p>TR went on to say that a detailed report is attached to support the minutes. TR highlighted points (from the report) aligned to the Police and Crime Plan. Referring to an important initiative (implemented about 2 years ago), the Force installed a dedicated Chief Inspector into each Local Authority, maintaining senior police leadership to Neighbourhood Policing and an escalation point of contact for partners in the community.</p> <p>TR explained that the Force are currently carrying five agencies of Constable level across the Community Policing Hubs, two in Bedford, none in Central and three in Luton supported by various stages of recruitment and back fill.</p>



TR - The report highlights essential demand on capability, including significant mental health demand on both policing and the wider system. To aid Neighbourhood Policing, there is a Street Triage Team (currently operating 10 hrs a day) providing access to a Mental Health Practitioner, a Police Officer and a Paramedic (in an ambulance) that attends specific calls. There is ongoing work to increase this service to 20 hrs a day. The Force have undertaken a review and are in dialogue with East London Foundation Trust who provide Mental Health Practitioners in the East of England Ambulance Service. In addition there is a Mental Health Nurse situated in the Control Room (12 hrs a day) providing important information to support calls.

The Education and Diversion Team are working alongside schools.

- 41 schools visited (per month)
- 100 interventions with pupils (per month) - complex referrals go through the Triage process

Community Cohesion Team (well regarded), Hate Crime Team, Enforcement Team (nearly at full strength) add further capability to support Community Policing. Service Volunteers - 38 Special Constables (SC) dedicated to Community Policing with 7 SC's working with the Enforcement Team are an added resource for specific operations.

TR - The Report and HMIC (HM Inspectorate of Constabulary) refer to two key areas:

- Neighbourhood Policing and
- Engaging and treating the Public fairly and with respect

The Force received 'Good' and there is further commentary in the attached report.

PCC – Clarified that Bedfordshire Police has an above average mark. TR provided further information, adding that on average, Force budgets are 8.8% dedicated to Neighbourhood Policing, whereas Bedfordshire Police at 10.4% reflects commitment to the capability. In addition, the report identifies the problem-solving nature of the Neighbourhood Policing team, tackling and reporting serious crime due to intelligence. Officers ongoing engagement of communities in person and at meetings are supported alongside 'digital contact' – via Social Media Academy training.

TR - Reports 'section 10.3 / 10.4' of good work, i.e. Low-level persistent beggar outside a shop (could be considered as Anti-Social Behaviour). The Neighbourhood Policing Team engaged with the individual and identified complex needs (including mental health / housing / exploitation). Through their intervention they got the individual the support they needed, which included housing and resulted in no further exploitation or begging. Long term problem solving for the individual. This is a good example of the unseen work that is carried out by the Team.

TR - At the end of the report there are a number of areas and projects ongoing to improve the outputs and delivery of the neighbourhood Policing Team. Focused work to populate the ASAB Teams. A recent move of premises into Flitwick due to changes of the Estate.

TR - Highlighted the contribution to Hot Spot Policing, evidence-based activity alongside specific deployment demonstrates the ability to reduce crime. Currently working on technology that provides data, 'Track My Cop' on crime driven areas will ensure focusing on the right areas at the right time.



TR - Pilot for Officers to carry Naloxone. Naloxone is a drug Officers can administer if they need to deal with heroin drug overdose. PCC – Will Naloxone (nasal spray) be carried by all Officers or a select few? TR – It is a specific trial and Response Officers / Custody Team are being trained by local NHS partners. Future roll-out to be considered. PCC – It is a positive move to save lives of addicts. PCC to 'chat' with those Officers taking part in the trial.

PCC – Raised concerns regarding the Local Priority Setting Meetings. Residents had reached out to Community Teams but had not had a response and therefore unable to attend. CC – Agreed they should be made aware so requested details to correct this.

PCC – Went on to say that a Community Officer attended a Priority Setting Meeting and there were only Councillors in attendance. The meeting should be for ALL people. GF confirmed that is how it should be. RG requested the details and she would deal with it.

PCC – Wanted it noted that he is proud of Community Policing and the Force which has consistently improved on delivery since he came into office. Speaking with one of the Inspectors recently, the abstraction rates of his team were clear and problem solving was part of their job. Having attended the 'Hub' the PCC established that the Officers were out 'on the beat' (foot patrols).

CC – Explained how the Community Teams align their work to the SOC (Serious and Organised Crime) teams. Working with Offender Managers to understand what risks may be posed and how they can support them to deliver their work – key on how they operate. There was an acknowledgement that the teams are working in collaboration.

The CC offered his thanks to the PCC for putting the Youth Communities together, providing an opportunity for the Force to be a part of them.

CC went on to congratulate the PCC for the work he launched last week in the media for provision of support for young children absent from school. This is the first case of this being done in the Country. This will contribute to the work the Force do through VERU (Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit), supporting and assisting those most vulnerable – young children.

CC – along with the PCC offered congratulations to Kimberly Lamb, recently appointed Director of VERU. The CC complimented the PCC for his work.

PCC – Acknowledged the CC's thanks. The VERU team and Educational Diversion Team (EDT) did a super job at a conference last week and presentations were on point. PCC – Wanted to know how schools could invite / reach out to EDT.

TR explained that this can be accessed and is embedded in the Community Hubs. There is direct contact for enquiries regarding various areas of business and the team will respond accordingly.

PCC – It was really positive to see how many of the schools were keen to have the Force visit and spend time with the young people. This helps to build bridges and create links between young people and the police.



Detailed paper/report attached.
<b>ITEM 10 – COMMUNITY POLICING</b>
<b>10.1 Community Policing Model Establishment update</b>
<p>PCC – Community Policing covered above.</p> <p>PW – All other information is in the report.</p>
<b>ITEM 11 – VOICE OF THE PUBLIC</b>
<b>11.1 Issues Raised to the PCC:</b>
<p>Questions based on correspondence and discussion from the public.</p> <p>PCC Q1 - What does the Force have in place to deal with the increase of violent offending during the Summer holiday period?</p> <p>CC – We have impressive and extensive plans in place. SB will brief the Police Minister in the next couple of weeks.</p> <p>SB – We anticipate an increase in violence across the summer months, more than in previous years. The focus will be threefold.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Across the County (three local authority areas), we have the River Festival, Luton Carnival and Ampthill Rocks. We are working closely with organisations to make sure they are all safe events.</li> <li>b. Hot people – focusing on the vulnerable as opposed to perpetrators. The agencies will focus on where young people congregate, such as parks, youth clubs etc. Officers will speak with young people to raise awareness about potential perils and diverting them away from crime. We are committed across county (all three areas) regarding the Tree Project (extended from Easter the Summer period). VERU are coordinating and facilitating a number of projects across the county to include all people and members of our communities. They are looking at provisions for those who would normally get meals at school. Those attending activities will be provided with meals – inclusive for all our communities.</li> <li>c. Building on the success in relation to the use of Stop Search. Regarding hot places and hot spot areas, there are dedicated additional resources patrolling the areas. Along with Partners, the Force is committed to understand cultural and community issues and impact.</li> </ol> <p>The use of Stop Search is an excellent tool and what we have seen since 2018 (when serious violence hit the headlines) almost double in number of the use of Stop Search every day. The Force are conducting Stop Searches in areas where we know serious violence is an issue.</p> <p>We've seen reductions in serious crime and increases in the use of Stop Search still leave Bedfordshire with one of the best disproportionality rates across the country. For two years running we have been showcased as the best Force in terms of reasonable grounds. We are not shying away from Stop Search; we are using it more than ever and it illustrates both the legitimacy in how we use it and also the productivity in reducing serious violence.</p>



SB – There is a lot to look forward to regarding Summer events and most importantly, keeping our communities safe.

PCC – Hope the plans go well and we have an uneventful Summer.

PCC Q2 – When will Bedfordshire Police Officers stop being required to ‘babysit’ children and looking after vulnerable adults which should be the Local Authority and Social Services responsibility?

CC – We are aware of the issue and something we have seen more of post pandemic. There appears to be an increase in some individuals with complex needs and some of those have been children. This impacts on the mental health service we provide. We rely on our partners in the East London Foundation Trust, specifically where children are concerned and the use of Police Protection Orders and how long children can be accommodated with us. This can have an impact on Police Officers. We need to get better at having appropriate conversations at the strategic level when there is a delay. Currently we are collating and monitoring the number of occasions and are in conversation with our Local Authority colleagues. We have been doing this at tactical level to work through it with the practitioners and now escalating to strategic level.

CC will take this up at the next Chief Executive Forum.

CC explained that it is taking a long time to get responses from Social Services to get help. It impacts on the Officers time regarding operational capacity.

PCC – What can we do to help? Residents ask questions about Police Officer response time and if Officers are childminding and doing Social Worker activity it impacts on their availability.

CC – Offer of help, we are grateful. When speaking to the Policing Minister we talk about health, so I will raise this regarding the pressure on the health system. Looking at practices in place nationally, I’ve recently spoken with the CC of Essex Police – They have a challenging initiative in place. They are not excepting partner responsibility when it is passed across. It starts off in the Control Room and continues elsewhere in the organisation. Essex have reduced their calls down from 70, to 10 a day. Hampshire have done something similar. However, ultimately, we will always have a public duty to preserve life. We are looking at this now with Chief Executive colleagues to progress.

*PCC and CC to revisit this in about 2-3 months’ time as it is an area of concern. Residents will be shocked to see the number of hours spent on Emergency Duty Teams which falls on the local authority’s remit. This has an impact on policing in our communities.*

TR – Regarding mental health - Officers can end up possibly sectioning individuals and taking them to a medical facility, where they need to hand them over to the medical professionals. The reality is we are waiting a long time, many hours before we can withdraw to ensure that individuals are stopped from harming themselves or leaving before any handover.

PCC – this draws on Police Officers time and the public expect Officers to do their job. It is a wider issue.

CC – Police Officers want to be out to serving the Public. We need to encourage our Partner Agencies to step up and make more contribution.



PCC – What are Bedfordshire Police doing regarding Police presence and ASB, in particular Bedford Town Centre?

SB – Bedford Town Centre has a large footprint. The 'Hub' covers Silver Street and Harpur Street. Just outside of that we have Midland Road and Tavistock Street. Initiatives under Safer Street Banner supporting Midland Road, we have joint initiatives between the police and partner agencies namely local CSPS in and around Tavistock Street. Bedford is a concentrated area that gets a dedicated policing presence, albeit not Lime Street as previously. Couple of things to highlight – the 2 most prolific areas for ASB are the Bus Station and McDonald's.

- From the 1 April 2022 have only seen 7 reports of ASB between them.
- Showcasing what we do – we have dedicated 'days of action' with the next one in Bedford Town Centre on the 8 June. This is where all partners come together to flood the area to support some of those individuals (subject to reporting of ASB) as they may be vulnerable themselves – such as street sleepers, sleeping rough.

Significantly the 8 June is on our local community footprint for the Safer Neighbourhood Team so others are aware and can be involved. Lots of activity going on in and around the Town Centre and lots of work with our Partners (in particular agencies such as Bedford Bid) to make sure that shopkeepers feel safe and are able to trade during this busy period. Again supplemented by further days of action coming up in the next couple of weeks.

PCC – What plans do Beds Police have for recruiting more Special Constables, Cadets and volunteers? I'll link this to another question – I applied to Beds Police over 8 months ago, why does it take so long?

PW – Applications for Special Constables is open continuously, so people can apply whenever they want to. We have intakes planned for August and January (2023). In terms of Cadets we reopen recruitment for Cadets in January (2023). This coincides with the Junior Police Squad. We are constantly looking for Volunteers. We have 60 currently working across Bedfordshire Police and continue to recruit.

PW - Regarding Police Officer recruitment the average time taken, from the point of submitting application to getting a start date is about six months. There are various stages of the process to go through which includes a Nationally Driven Assessment Centre, Local Interview, Pre-Employment Checks, Vetting (no issues) and Medicals. Each stage requires papers to cross from applicant to Force and requires Recruitment to coordinate with the dates of the National process. We are conscious that when an applicant submits their application, we go quiet, so individuals are not sure of where they are in the process.

PW - We have just recruited a few individuals and are making sure that during the lengthy process they are kept up to date, i.e. where they are in the process, what they need to be doing, why there's a delay etc..

PW - Hopefully the 8-month long process concerning the individual and where it went quiet, won't happen moving forward and any applicant will know exactly where they are in the process.

PCC – Could the Force create a poster about the August (2022) and January (2023) intake for Special Constables which we can share with Partners and Community Groups and to share on Social Media/WhatsApp?



PW - That can be done. Advertise at fairs and event – recruitment of both Special Constables and Regular Officers.

PCC – What is the Force doing to promote the welfare of and physical well-being for Officers and Staff?

PW – Various, see below:

- a. We have our own Occupational Health Department where Officers and Staff can be referred to so they can get required treatment if they need it whether physical or psychological.
- b. A 24/7 Employee Assistance Programme (which is completely independent) where people having work issues or non-work issues can dial in to get support on various things.
- c. We have a team of 3 people that are dedicated to the well being of our Officers and Staff and they constantly look at all avenues to make sure we are addressing every issue that our Officers or Staff could go through.
- d. We run Brew Monday fortnightly, where we invite guest speakers to talk on a number of topics in relation to well-being and welfare.
- e. Recently we introduced Gym Inductions and personal training sessions to support physical health.
- f. Links to local weight management programmes
- g. Bedfordshire University for Injury Clinic Assessment and rehabilitation sessions.
- h. We recently invested in 3 Lifestyle Checkpoint Kiosks that will be based in Luton, Kempston and Dunstable.
- i. We are looking at 'Oscar Kilo' which is a National well-being van (offering lots of services) that goes to different Forces and to get this service into the Force.
- j. We also deliver Trauma Impact Prevention Techniques, which mainly focuses on Student Officers and Response Officers.

SB – To further support people at work so we have created a support network, people who will, out of their own time, make sure they are available for people when they're on shift patterns – so for example, this evening there will be peer support for one of the teams that recently had a disproportionate number of incidents that they attended. The service is available so if they want to take some time out from shift to go and speak to someone they can (Sergeants and Inspectors have fully bought into this concept). The Network is available for different teams at different times throughout the course of their working week.

CC – For Information! If Officers aren't aware, the PCC donated £20K to the Counselling Foundation as a commission service that could help Officers and Staff. Access for all.

PCC – Good to have schemes and programmes in place – happy and keen to be cited on this. Do you know how well people are making use of these different facilities?

PW – We can get the data. What we did do was try to see all our Officers and Staff across the organisation. We have provided all Officers and Staff with a drop-down card with all the services that they can access.



PCC – That’s all the questions that I have been sent. I want to thank everyone for taking the time to write in and also thank the Chief Constable and his team for answering the questions comprehensively.

PCC – Thank you for keeping our County safer as well.

**12 – NEXT AGENDA:**

Deep Dive into one of the Priority Areas.

**Next Meeting:** 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022