

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

25th November 2021

Attending:	Festus Akinbusoye, Police Crime Commissioner - OPCC (FA)
	Garry Forsyth, Chief Constable - Force (GF)
	Phil Wells, Chief Finance Officer - Force (PW)
	Trevor Rodenhurst, Deputy Chief Constable – Force (TR)
	Anna Cuthbert, Interim Chief Executive - OPCC (AC)
	Wayne Humberstone, Head of Delivery – OPCC (WH)
	Katie Beaumont, Transparency Manager – OPCC (KB)
	Gavin Chambers, CFO for the OPCC (GC)
	Madelyn Doggrell, Staff Officer DCC - Force (MD)
	Rachel Glendenning, Staff Officer - Force (RG)
	Gemma McCormack, PA to PCC and Chief Executive - OPCC (GMc)

<p>PUBLIC SECTION – Recording available - https://www.bedfordshire.pcc.police.uk/meetings/</p> <p>FA welcomed everyone to the public section of the Delivery and Beating Crime Board.</p>
<p><u>ITEM 10: COMMUNITY POLICING</u></p>
<p>TR advised that what they are going to do in order to structure updates to this meeting in a way that covers the main themes of the Police and Crime Panel and that there is a lot of good work that is going on across the Force that directly contributes to the Police and Crime Plan. At the moment we are going through a mapping exercise where we look at all the activity we are doing and we categorise that against the Plan. This work will be ongoing between now and the next meeting which will allow us to come back and look at specific areas of the Plan. FA advised that the Police and Crime Panel will also be doing this which means that we will all be in step with each other.</p>
<p>10.1 Community Policing Model Establishment Update</p>
<p>PW discussed the Summary of the Community Policing Model. This shows that the overall model for community policing is budgeted for 162 Police Officers and PCSO's and that includes the Hubs, Hate Crime Team, Rural Crime Team, Community Cohesion Team and Community Enforcement Team. In ours hubs we currently have 10 less Officers that what we should have, 157/167. We have new 5 recruits joining the team on the 4th January 2022 and we expect to have another 3 soon after that. In addition to that we now have Community Specials operating and in September and October, the hours we have had the Specials doing Community work is the equivalent of 3 PC's per month, so even though we have Vacancies with PC's we have some of the Specials filling that work.</p> <p>The paper also speaks about the work we are doing with our neighbourhoods and familiarity with the public and trying to establish some of those relationships to make sure we can start understanding better the community priorities.</p>

Policing activity examples highlighted on the paper. This month the focus has been on Luton, last month it was Bedford and next month it will be Central Bedfordshire and this will be done on a rotating basis. The key area for this is the community policing understanding the issues and working with Partners to try and address those.

TR advised regarding the new recruits who will be coming in January 2022 and clarified, they are experienced Officers but are new in the community teams.

TR also updated regarding the Social Media Academy which has now been launched. This is pulling officers through specific training and for each cohort there is 11 of them, over a period of 6 months get an enhanced skill set around social media. This is a really important and effective way of communicating with the public.

FA shared its been really good to see the amount of social media traffic from some of the community teams and that it is really important for the public to see what they are doing and also the outcomes, so well done to those teams that have been doing this level of engagement.

FA asked for any examples from the community teams and what they have been able to achieve.

PW provided some examples of what is currently being done in Luton, at the next meeting examples will be brought of what is being done in Central Bedfordshire. Operation Foresight which is specifically around George Street and Bute Street and the issues there with street drinking, begging and antisocial behaviour a we have had around 229 calls since the 1st July 2021 around ASB. We have been working with partners and the town intervention group in terms of alternative services that are available to us. We are conducting high level patrols in those areas. We have seen a reduction already following the support we have put in those areas.

TR shared another example of the work the community team are doing at the moment in terms of the school boy in Luton who was stabbed and killed outside his school. The trial is ongoing in Luton which is a very challenging event for the community as both of the boys are from the same community. Our Community Cohesion Team are spending a lot of time in that community trying to understand and address any tensions that may be there due to this ongoing situation.

FA thanked the Force for their awareness and sensitivity towards this very difficult issue.

ITEM 11: EFFECTIVENESS

11.1 Police Data Trends Including Stop and Search Breakdown

TR advised that the Stop and Search data is only available quarterly and said that we have just had the most recent quarters data back which he will report on.

Stop and Search is very important but it is not used effectively it can really damage the publics confidence. When we discussed this last time, we were clear that where there is a disproportionality we will try to understand it and then explain it. Last time we reported that if you were from a black community you were 6 times more likely to be stopped and searched than if you were white, if you were Asian you were 4 times more likely. There continues to be scrutiny of stop and search and Officers and look at the data to see if there were any concerning figures. We now have Quarter 2 data back and I am pleased to report that those figures are going in the right direction. We actually stopped and searched more people, if you were black you were 3.9 times more likely of being stopped and searched than if you were white, if you were Asian it was 2.2, other ethnic minority was 1.5.

In terms of positive outcomes, last time we were at 27% and we are now at 31%, previously we were at 5% where we were making arrests and we are now at 12%. In Luton if you are black you are 2 times more likely to be stopped and searched than if you were white. In Bedford if you were black it was 4.4 times more likely than if you were white and that is 65 out of a total of 316 searches. 17 of the stops were intelligence that directed those to happen, 5 were from members of public, 12 were calls into the Control Room and 29 were self-generated. 28 were possession with intent to supply and 32 were for possession. If you look at Bedford in those figures, 6 out of the 8 Wards focussed on drug related issues and ASB in the community meetings. There is more work to do on this in terms of our understanding, tracking of it and direction of travel.

FA advised that he very much welcomes that this is a positive step in the right direction and the find rate and charge rates going up. FA asked regarding the disproportionality rate in CBC. TR advised in CBC it is 4.3 which is only related to 12 searches, this used to be in double figures. FA asked how the Force has been able to achieve this reduction overall. TR shared this feature in all of the training to the new recruits and every front-line Officer has been trained on a bespoke package. We now have our top 10 searching Officers each month and if you are in the top 10 you meet with the ACC who talks about the use of those powers, its not necessarily negative but for more of an understanding.

11.2 Recruitment and Retention

PW advised that he has produced a report based on the Police and Crime Plan recruitment and retention of Police Officers. As at the 31/10/2021 the Force had 1,382 Police Officers against a target of 1,384 by the end of the financial year. We expect ourselves to be around 47 more Officers than the target by the end of the year which allows us to be ahead of the curve by the end of the next financial year when we expect an increase target of a further 72 more Officers. This puts us in a really good place.

The PEQF which is the new training regime for out student officers, we had 13 new recruits against a target of 19. We are seeing nationally that those targets are being met. We are confident when it goes live on the 1st July that we will be able to fill our cohorts.

In terms of retention, turnover at the moment is running at about 8.6% for Police Officers and the national average is 5.5%, if we were to get close to the national average that would mean 40 officers leaving each year, this is something we need to focus on as an organisation.

We had a recent focus group with student officers and what is clear is that some of them are struggling with obtaining their NVQ qualification alongside the demand of the work they have to do as a Police Officer. We need to look at how we can bridge that gap but we are seeing that a lot are feeling this pressure. We are reaching out to the Police Uplift to see if they can come and do a Peer Review around retention in case there is anything Nationally that we are not currently doing.

PCSO's, we are seeing an increase in PCSO's becoming regular Officers which is a positive, we have an establishment of 53 and for the intake for October we are currently at 55, we have another intake in January 2022 where we expect to end the year with 56 PCSO's.

The focus around gender and ethnicity which is the National focus for Police Uplift. In terms of the new recruits in October, in terms of Officers we had 13 new starters, 4 were black and ethnic minorities and 5 females. The national average around females is 32% and we are running as a Force at around 38% but there is still a drive to increase the number of females in the Force. In terms of ethnicity 7.6% is the National

average and we are currently running at 9.9, although we are above the national average we still have some work around our own communities.

FA thanked the Force for the figures in terms of the implications of percentage increase. FA asked how many people are joining the Force from black/afro Caribbean communities. PW advised that the majority of people joining from black and ethnic minorities are Asian and we are not seeing a high level of interest from the black community joining the Force. We now have two Positive Action Officers working with the community and they are targeting certain areas of the community around the attraction of joining Bedfordshire Police.

FA asked regarding the number of current Students – 326, does that create any challenges on an operational point of view.

GF advised that it creates lots of challenges as we know that when people come into Policing they are more likely to leave in the first three years. It also creates issues on how we are going to manage those numbers within the organisation because when people join they have an idea of what they want to do and this is often around response. Also, where we are located geographically they can get a higher salary in London or Hertfordshire and those Forces can accommodate them in the areas where they want to work whereas we can't. There is also a constant pressure on our Tutor Constables, they don't have any respite and literally go from one student to the next and it is additional demand. We have 115 Tutors on response at the moment and they are constantly busy. There are 4 separate Student Development Officers but we are going to try and grow these numbers as well.

PW advised that we still have a number of vacancies and will provide a paper to FA so that he can see which areas these cover.

Action – PW to provide a paper to FA regarding overall establishment vacancies by area/team.

12: VOICE OF THE PUBLIC

12.1 Issues Raised to the PCC

FA advised that this is where he advises with the Chief and Senior Leadership team some of the issues which have been raised to him by the public.

Male Violence Against Women and Girls:

TR advised that today is White Ribbon Day and the Force have chosen this day to launch their strategy of male violence against women and girls. We are fully leading the partnership response with 16 days of action. We are very much shifting the focus to be on perpetrator focus but there will very much still be some communication which is encouraging victims of that violence to come forward. We are targeting the comms at the perpetrator side of it and are using case studies to describe cohesive controlling behaviour and abuse starts to look like to help signpost perpetrators help or away from the issue where they are committing the offence. We are encouraging the public to look at this material.

FA asked how the Force prioritise against risk and low-level crimes, domestic abuse and rapes. TR advised that we have dedicated teams for those offences where we prioritise for those our areas. Our performance is strong and there are response investigation teams in place.

Force Control Room:

FA asked if there is anything he can do to support the FCC. TR advised that we are recognising that our average calls to the control room was around 9,000 but in October there were 10,999 calls. There are a number of things we are doing about the pressures the FCC is facing. We have an FQIP programme that is looking into shift programme and changes in processes. In January we are introducing a Digi Desk which is a change to our online webchat where Officers and Control Room Officers will be working on the same desk to try and divert the demand. We have changed the recording when you ring the 101 Control Room. It tells you in real terms on how long you will be waiting and now also gives the options of having a call back. This has significantly reduced the pressures with 101 calls. Online reporting has been identified and will be in place by March 2022 and we are also working with the private sector on support with signposting demand by using sophisticated software.

FA asked if we know why there is such a high volume of calls. GF advised it is not unique to us and is the same nationally with the ambulance service as well as the police. Some of it could be down to there being more people in the country at the moment as they are unable to or are reluctant to travel. One of the consequences coming out of the pandemic is there is a lot less tolerance of people and people phoning emergency services quicker. Some of the failure demand from the ambulance service will also be coming into us as well. There is an increase in mental health demand as a pressure on services is evident as well. All of that consequently is as a result of the pandemic.

FA asked if the high volume of 999 calls could be as we don't have enough people on working on 101. GF advised that some of it could be failure demand on 101, we prioritise the 999 calls over the 101's but we still manage to answer a high number of 101 calls. This does impact our capacity to answer the 101 calls but that's when we look at technological solutions such as letting the caller know where they are in the queue, diverting them to webchat where we have gone from 1,000 webchat requests to 4,000. This seems to have opened up a new demand pressure as we haven't been able to get the laptops to enable people to work from home to work on the webchat responses as there is a chip shortage. We have now, through the Gold Groups secured 15 laptops to use to support the webchat responses.

FA asked if a report could be provided in 3 months' time on how these steps and new systems are working.

Action – Force to provide a report in 3 months on how the FCC is managing with the new steps and systems that have been put in place.

Burglary:

FA advised that he is aware of some of the figures that have come out about the solved rates for burglaries in Bedfordshire and asked what we are doing about that. TR advised that the figures took one particular cut of data for crimes that were closed about suspects. Our normal measure of success around burglary is; how many. There have been 412 less so far this year so less victims of crimes which is positive; in terms of our solved rates that is certainly going in the right direction. The rolling 12-month data – we are 32nd for solved rate and crime rate is about 33rd however, traditionally we have been in the top 15 but this is where the 12th month falls in terms of the data. I have looked at the performance year to date, we are currently for solved crimes 8.6% and last year we were at 9.4% however, we have had less burglaries but October has been a particularly fruitful month for our dedicated burglaries. We have invested in a dedicated team so we now have a squad and their day job is to look at burglaries. They have secured in one case where they stopped a crime series of 12 crimes that were immediately linked and 33 charges came out of the back of that, in the last two weeks we have got a total of 44 charges. If you look at that period its about 50% solved rate and when you

add that to the previous mentioned numbers, I believe we will be about 13.4% solved rate which will be back at the top end of Forces across the Country. I would be keen to give an update at the next meeting in January 2022 regarding burglaries.

TR also advised that it is the time of year where we see a rise in season burglaries and the Force are providing advice to the public via social media on how to prevent burglaries this time of year.

Action – TR to provide an update regarding burglary solved rates and GPS tagging for the January 2022 meeting.

Travellers:

FA mentioned regarding the traveller's funeral that took place a couple of weeks ago and asked if there were any updates from the Force. TR advised we were of the funeral in advance, we engaged with the family and organisers of the funeral. We put response in place which was precautionary at the funeral but what we did see was activity that was not in accordance with what we had agreed would happen. That manifested itself into some antisocial behaviour, low level crime and some of that was filmed and shared widely. There was a policing operation around that to prevent any harm to the wider public and to allow the funeral to take place. We have been able to gather information around the offences that took place and there will be further enforcement in relation to the offences that occurred in due course.

Officer and Public Recognition:

FA shared that he has read some articles recently that have been distributed from the Comms Team where they point out that some of the intel that has been used has come from members of the public which we all want to encourage. Do we have anything in place for recognising members of the public for when they support Bedfordshire Police. GF advised yes, we do but we haven't been able to do the Awards Ceremonies that we would usually do due to COVID restrictions but we do have award ceremonies that involve both the Police and the public which would be Chief Constables Commendations. RG advised that when we know members of the public have done outstanding acts of bravery we would put them forward for a Bravery Award as we would our own Officers. The Bravery Awards are taking place in December 2021 and DCC Rodenhurst will be attending. It is usually the Sergeant's on the ground who come forward and let us know the good news stories and when members of the public have gone above and beyond. This year we have put forward a delivery driver who came across a woman and man having a violent domestic, he took it upon himself to intervene and got the lady into his works van and drove her to place of safety. While he was driving her there the offender was pursuing and ramming that vehicle but he maintained keeping her safe, was on the phone to the Police and got her to a place of safety. The offender was arrested by Police and is now serving 3 years in Prison. He has already been awarded a commendation, he has been put forward for the Sheriff of London Award and we have put him forward for the National award as well.

FA said that it is really wonderful to hear that there is something in place to recognise the good work that is done by the people of Bedfordshire. GF advised that Police would not be able to do their job without the support that is given by the public which is why it is really important that we recognise the contribution that they make. TR also advised that two Officers will also be attending the Bravery Awards. This relates to a lady who was going through a mental health crises and jumped into the river in Bedford. The two Officers ended up jumping in the river as well which was high and fast flowing and just managed to rescue the lady and themselves. They have both been put forward for the Bravery Award.

13: VERU

13.1 VERU Monthly Performance:

TR shared that we are very proud of the VERU and Kimberly Lamb who runs the unit has got a brilliant team who work on diverting young people to positive pathways in life. The info graphic that comes out every month is very informative and is pleasing to see the work that they are doing. We have had two academic referrals for that unit which are both glowing.

FA agreed that they are doing a fantastic job and finds it remarkable the reach that they have across the communities. FA asked how do the Force know that they are delivering and that they are not just focussed on Luton. TR updated in October 2021 there were 15 referrals and 8 were from Central Bedfordshire. The referrals are from Safeguarding Teams, Boson, Gangs Team, Mental Health, Schools, Early Help etc which are across the County.

ITEM 14 NEXT AGENDA

Offender Management but the theme will be about crime prevention.

Date of Next Meeting:

20th January 2022.