



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

**31<sup>st</sup> March 2022**

<b>Attending:</b>	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)

<b><u>ITEM 9 – OPCC UPDATES</u></b>
<p>FA welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies from Garry Forsyth and Phil Wells. FA expressed his condolences to the people of Leicestershire for the loss of their former Chief Constable Simon whom FA stated was a highly respected man and a lot of people at Bedfordshire Police had worked with him and had been impacted by his good work. We were all deeply saddened to hear of his passing and FA will be writing to Leicestershire’s PCC Rupert to express our condolences to him and offering him support in any way that we can.</p>
<b>9.1 PCC Updates</b>
<p>FA advised that the main update he has is around funding for commissioned partners for 2022/2023 and almost £1.5 million has been commissioned for partners for this coming financial year. This is aimed at providing support for victims of crime and intervention work, we had over 100 applicants but unfortunately we could not fund everyone. FA is aware that not everyone is satisfied with the outcomes but this was a very open, transparent and independently judged commissioning process which is open to scrutiny and the OPCC office will be publishing some information about that process. We now have partners who are commissioned and the focus will be on them delivering in terms of the early intervention and diversion work we are doing as well as support for victims of crime.</p>
<b>9.2 Force Activity Against the Police and Crime Plan</b>
<p>TR shared that what we have proposed to do to enable us to track progress against the Police and Crime Plan is through a collation of all the relevant information, present at the next Board Meeting in</p>



April with a baseline report that covers all of the key areas in the Plan with an assessment of where we think we are against those areas of the plan, and thereafter from May onwards, will go into a themed area of the Plan. What TR would like to do is work with AV to map out how we would seek to theme this throughout the year, this will be made up for the first 6 months using a combination of strategic, tactical and operational assessment including some spotlight operational examples. This will take us through to October/November and at that point, once we have covered all of the areas and TR would suggest FA uses the remainder of the year to ask us to report back on a number of specific areas where you are keen to track further progress. FA advised that he is mindful of a lot of the work that is going on to deliver on the Police and Crime Plan but FA is not sure if the public are always able to see it in a schematic way and once we have this in place it will help to see how activity aligns with the Plan. AV passed on her thanks to Ed Major for some real expert input into this and also to acknowledge that we didn't want the Force to duplicate anything and we have tried to use what systems are already in place and where there have been gaps and Ed has been really helpful in supporting with this. This is the missing part out of the planning infrastructure that we sort back in November to address and AV is really pleased that we are at this position now. TR advised with agreement from FA, at the meeting next month we will have the baseline report that we will run through. FA was in agreement and advised that this will be really helpful and will also be helpful for the Police and Crime Panel as well.

## **ITEM 10 – COMMUNITY POLICING**

### **10.1 Community Policing Model Establishment update**

TR updated for our Officers at our community policing hubs, we should have 67 and we are running at 66. In terms of Police Community Support Officers, of a total of 47 we have 45. In total of 114 posts we only have 3 vacancies across that whole area which is the best position we have reported on at this meeting. FA asked in terms of the deployment of those, are they still being tasked with the problem solving proactive work? TR confirmed that it is the same as was agreed and that they are committed to problem solving and operational activity in their local policing areas. They are however a team and if one of the community officers has a problem where they need support then they will call on other community officers to help them which is how we would expect them to work, but in the main they are deployed and doing exactly that sort of work. FA asked regarding the extra 4 that we have going into the Rural Crime Team, when do we expect those to be in place? TR advised that we don't have the exact date at the moment but we did give a commitment of having them in place by the summer but we will report back once we have the date.

## **ITEM 11 – VOICE OF THE PUBLIC**

### **11.1 Issues Raised to the PCC:**

FA advised that this is the section where he raises with the Force some of the issues that have been raised to him by the public.

FA advised that some of the issues that have come to light are initially how the Force deal with customer complaints. FA agrees that there are some areas where there needs to be improvements from what FA is seeing and is interested to know what plans there are in place to try and address



these concerns? SB agreed that this is an area that we can see some processes need to be slicker and our team that manage these is our Customer Service Team and they have a number of responsibilities that is dealing with complaints that come in from the public but also managing the Enquiry Offices across the Force area. We have found that this is such an important area for our public being able to feedback to us in terms of the level of service, we have some staffing challenges within there and we have had a change in leadership with the Manager leaving and a new Manager starting on the 19<sup>th</sup> April and this is someone who is completely independent of Policing. In terms of filling those gaps within the Team there is an advert out at the moment and we are currently in a recruitment process to fill those gaps. It is really important to get this right and SB would recommend that when the Manager starts, we go into a deep dive of what those process issues are with a view to an improvement plan showing what steps we can make to improve the service. FA advised that he understands the current issues with staffing but from a public's point of view, what should be the minimum that they expect if they want to express their views about the quality of service they have received, is there a benchmark that is in place for those Teams to meet? SB advised that we should initially be making contact with the individual as a matter of urgency and we have to take into account the working hours and sometimes there will be delays if, for instance, someone makes contact on a Saturday morning and this is not picked up until the Monday. If that contact is made via email then they should get an immediate response to acknowledge their email. FA advised that as this is an area that we can control it will be good to start seeing the improvements in this service once the new Manager is in place. TR agreed that we all want everyone to receive a good response and expectation of when we will respond to them, we recognise that we can't keep everyone happy all the time but we want to ensure that we are doing our best. It is a good opportunity to look at these processes with the new Manager coming in. FA advised that it is also important that if an Officer is off sick that there are good processes in place where this can be picked up by someone else.

FA asked in terms of the Victim Satisfaction Surveys, are these happening and how are they being managed? SB advised at the moment we conduct these surveys but due to the nature of that team who have several competing demands, they are limited. We are going to our new automated system and we are doing a soft launch to ensure that it is all working and we will be having a trial next week where we will be selecting a certain number of victims to again make sure the IT is working etc. After the soft launch this will be rolled out to all victims of crime and the Survey will offer whether this is completed by email, mobile phone etc. The survey is easy to complete and there will be lots of helpful links to signpost our victims to services who can provide support. TR advised that we are also trialling a new IT system that will support with calls coming into the Force Control Room, we are working closely with ICT and a Provider to look into a workable service. What we won't be doing is



paying a big Tech company for this service until we have something that we know works for our staff and the public.

FA asked what is the long term future for the Enquiry Office in Bedfordshire? TR advised that we would like to have an Enquiry Office in lots of locations across the County but what we have to do every year is review this as part of our priority based budgeting. This is not about cutting costs but we use it to determine areas where we need investment and to enhance service. With Enquiry Offices we will look at a very close analysis of the demand so for example, one of the Enquiry Offices we no longer provide a service at, that decision was taken because we were getting between 1 and 2 people visiting per day which is not a good use of public money as that money could be used to fund another PCSO or someone in the Control Room. To reassure you, we do provide a service at the moment at Kempston HQ and at Luton and we will look at the demand and review that but there is no plan to change anything at the moment but it is right to review it as the way public seek to access services has changed considerably and continues to do so. FA agreed that as much as he is drawn to having physical buildings in as much areas as possible, FA has to justify the costs that are associated with these. TR also advised that we are just going live with a Digi desk in our Control Room which is a combination of Comms Officer, Neighbourhood Officer and an individual from the Control Room, all providing information and means of access across various platforms just because of that constant change. WH updated in regards to the public accessibility points and advised that we are now well underway with having a single online home project which is the national project around the public having access to police systems remotely. We are looking at how we can get some of these terminals out across locations in Bedfordshire and there will be a number of choices available over the coming months.

FA queried what the Force is doing in dealing with demand level on the Emerald Team and also, have we had any Domestic Homicide Reviews in Bedfordshire in recent times, have we had any learning from those? TR updated regarding the Emerald Team who deal with all types of abuse in relation to violence against women and girls and male violence. We have a great deal on specialism within the Force including Victim Engagement Officers who look after victims who are vulnerable within those circumstances. The demand in that area is high and the Team are carrying a number of vacancies, they do an amazing job and that also adds to the pressure of their work. Whilst we wait for the big increase in resources that we have in terms of Officer increase to pass through the system ultimately to become Investigators as you need to be an Investigator to go into that area of business, we are going to bring in 20 PIP 2, who are people who have a Detective level Investigative knowledge, many of them will be retired Officers as a temporary measure to go into that Team. This will be whilst we internally train up our own individuals to go into that investigatory pathway to then replace those individuals in due course. All agreed that this is great news for the Team and also for the people of Bedfordshire. SB updated for clarity Domestic Homicide Reviews can be commissioned by the local Community Safety Partnership where the death of a person has or



appears to have been as the result of a domestic incident. These Reviews are not enquiries, they do not seek to apportion blame nor do they tread on the toes of the Coroner proceedings. They are there to help Agencies improve the response and pick out any learning, each of the Agencies involved with the person is asked to provide a report and that is independent chaired and partner agencies can question one another in terms of the support they provided to the individual. The last Domestic Homicide Review in Bedfordshire was in 2020 and that was as a result of a Homicide in Central Bedfordshire. The only observation from that review that came out in relation to Policing was for policing to satisfy the wider partners in regards to the training that Officers receive in relation to domestic abuse. This is something that we always prioritise and as a Force we prioritise two types of training, general vulnerability and domestic abuse. We have commissioned some further training this year, DA Matters which is delivered by a National Charity and will be delivered in May/June to all frontline staff. SB confirmed that we have to evidence against any findings and advised that we have delivered against the outcome from the last Domestic Homicide Review.

FA asked in terms of strip search, do we have any information in relation to strip searches in Bedfordshire? RG shared regarding strip searches that have been completed following someone being stopped under Section 1 of PACE, in the last 2 years for people under the age of 18 we have done 18 searches and the majority of those have taken place either in Custody or home addresses where they are then accessible to their appropriate adults. Out of those searches, the majority have been between the ages of 14 – 17, there were 17 males and 1 female and all were searched in the presence of an appropriate adult. RG advised that Ian Taylor, Superintendent will look at any complaints in relation to Section 1 and he reported that none have been received in relation to strip searches.

## **12 – NEXT AGENDA:**

AV advised that the deadline for applications for the VERU funding is the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2022 and our next Delivery Board is on the 25<sup>th</sup>. VERU structure to be discussed at the April meeting.

FA thanked everyone at the Force for all the great work you do and advised that he is very mindful of the pressures the Force is under.

**Next Meeting:** 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022