

**POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR BEDFORDSHIRE
STRATEGIC BOARD MINUTES**

26th August 2021

Attending:	Festus Akinbusoye, Police and Crime Commissioner
	Clare Kelly, Chief Executive, OPCC (CK)
	Garry Forsyth, Chief Constable (GF)
	Trevor Rodenhurst, Deputy Chief Constable (TR)
	Gavin Chambers, CFO for the OPCC (GC)
	Sharn Basra, Assistant Chief Constable (SB)
	Madelyn Doggrell, Staff Officer DCC (MD)
	Rachel Glendenning, Staff Officer (RG)
	Katie Beaumont, Transparency Manager (KB)

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

FA welcomed the board members to the August Strategic Board Meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record with one amendment.

ITEM 2 – PCC QUESTIONS OR ITEMS TO RAISE

2.1 Actions from previous meetings

Actions were reviewed and log updated accordingly.

ACTION: GC raised that the last paper mentioned a business case coming surrounding the million pound additional spend on the firing range and training centre and he believes it needs to be captured in the action points. CK asked for a new action to be logged as 71 so the paper is received.

2.2 POCA

CK stated that she has had a conversation with PW that money is built into the budget, but this was added to the agenda to understand what it was specifically allocated for, so we can close off that conversation, and make sure it goes towards something that an OPCC objective was well suited to, our discussions started around something in Emerald. PW stated that the Force created an income target of POCA in 2017/18 which at the time the PCC wanted to increase police numbers but we were looking at 2.8 million worth of reductions, so in effect, what we have done is created an income target for POCA that allows us to increase our police officer establishment by ten that year whilst still making 2.8 million pounds worth of savings , so in essence this is funding those new officer roles. PW stated when we set the target for the first couple of years, it was met, but POCA income across our region has reduced, this year we were at about 125K, again for 250 target, so 50% down.

PW stated he has spoken to CK about this and believes a conversation needs to be had to go back to ERSOU to understand with all the new legislation that has been put in place around the ability to cease funds whether or not we are still using these effectively or not, but at the moment if that is the trend, i.e POCA income will reduce, when we look at our budget for 2022/23, one of our pressures will be to reduce that income target which in effect then becomes growth.

The DCC stated the only other thing he would add is, there is a SOC element to the uplift and we will be deciding on what and how that is prioritised in negotiation with the Home Office as part of the SR and ministerial priorities. Undoubtedly there is a focus on drugs, within Force we are doing additional work with the Costello grant and there is an uplift, potentially as part of the SR, in terms of fraud, financial investigation as part of the uplift, so those capabilities will focus a bit particularly with a swing back towards drugs which is generally where you get cash back which is not linked to victims, so it falls into the POCA category. In the medium term there is probably going to be an upward trajectory but we have to get the resources there, they have to be trained, to start to have operational effect so we are talking years rather than months, in terms of seeing that. CK stated so we probably do need to do that new evaluation bit. PW stated in 2022/23 we need to look at 2023/24 and we can probably start rebuilding that back in.

2.3 Business Support from Bedfordshire Police

The PCC stated the reason why he wanted to discuss this is because he has had a lot of interaction with Businesses. Just yesterday, the PCC was in Leighton Buzzard received reports that staff had been groped by a customer, called 999 and no one turned up and according to the manager someone called from Bedfordshire Police the following day and they were told that it wasn't a priority. The PCC stated he has had several other correspondence from businesses stating they are treated as if they are not a priority and told to employ a security guard, get CCTV and the quality of response is that it is of low concern. So the PCC is interested to have a clear idea regarding the strategy on how the Force deals with businesses and retail crime.

The CC stated that the Exec can have a look at the particular case, as he does not know about the particular details of it.

ACTION: Specific details surrounding crime in business, with employer contacting Bedfordshire Police informing them that an employee has been groped and they were informed that it is not a priority to be passed to exec team so this can be looked into.

The CC stated if the offender has committed an offence and then left the scene, so there is no ongoing/immediate threat to the individual and there is no opportunity for immediate apprehension that would be a delayed response, it would not be an emergency response from three nines etc. But what we shouldn't be doing is phoning them up telling them that it is not a priority for us, as it is a crime and it is a sexual crime, so we should be providing a level of service to that. The CC stated that the Force have had some really good retail crime initiatives, an example of this is the work being completed with Tesco in Queens Park, where they wrote to the Force and they were concerned with the level of service that they were being provided. The local community team have worked with them and the Force have received communication back some months later stating that the response has been great. The CC stated that the Force provides a level of service to all of our businesses, but they have to prioritise our response due to resources, but we should not be going back stating that this isn't a priority. The CC stated that the Force does respond to all different types of crime, but some of these will be provided with a response which is via telephone and we should not be in a position where we are not responding at all.

The PCC stated in terms of what we have in place at the moment for shop lifting and theft, what is the Forces position in terms of how this prioritised. The PCC asked if he owned a shop and he had £100 of shoplifting from an individual, over a period of time that adds up to a small business and he understands resourcing issues. What long term ideas do we have to deal with this situation?

The CC stated firstly we do not have a policy stating we do not attend shop lifting, people think we do, but the CC confirmed we do not have that. The CC stated what the force do have is if you have a minor loss on a single occasion with no identifiable suspect, or nor reasonable prospect of investigative opportunity, we probably won't come and this will probably be advised to the individual on the telephone and say 'we are filing this crime'. However if you are a shop which is being regularly preyed upon by an identifiable individual and the loss is significant to you, then it all goes through the THRIVE process, in terms of understanding threat, harm, risk, investigatory opportunity, vulnerability and

then we will deploy to that incident. It might be appropriate deployment if it's an ongoing problem is through the community team with a problem solving approach which exactly what we did with the Tesco in Queens Park and [REDACTED] and his team have done a brilliant job around making sure the store understood their responsibilities around crime prevention and moving high value assets away from the front of the store. The crime will be recorded and it will vary from recording and filing it, up to giving a full comprehensive problem solving approach with the community team and the bits in between which maybe we respond on ad hoc basis, arrest someone and prosecute. The CC confirmed it will vary but stated that Beds Police do not have a non-attendance police for retail crime or shop lifting.

The PCC stated lastly on this point, a lot of the shops will have CCTV footage, what do the Force have in place at the moment for people to report or provide the Force with this type of evidence?

The CC stated at the moment we do have an application called evidence.com which is a digital portal, where people can upload CCTV into, this is an interim solution, until we get something called the DAMS solution which is the force DAMS solution which we discuss at seven force, which is in procurement at the moment and under development. At the moment evidence.com is used for DASHCAM submissions through to CTC, but it is available for evidential submissions of CCTV, if people want to use it for that as well. It is not massively utilised for that, it is used for DASHCAM but the DAMS solution will enable for that to take place. The PCC asked when DAMS was going to ready, the CC does not know without looking at the papers. CK confirmed it is quite a while a way. The CC stated that we can make wider use of evidence.com if need be, as we haven't pushed this, as it is not the finished solution we would want it to be, as it's a bit clunky. The CC stated what we tend to rely on is officers will attend and they will take a video of the CCTV on their body worn video and that is how we evidentially get it in to the system, in the majority of cases. It is an innovation, the ideal route would be they phoned up, inform us they have CCTV, we tell them to submit via the digital portal and then it will be reviewed. Then we could do an arm chair investigation or allocate it appropriately to an investigation officer to follow it up.

SB stated to offer some further reassurance, by means of a good example, and how we bring these incidents to force structures. At the moment within FTCCG which is our Force tasking model, we have raised Operation Primrose as a Force priority. Operation Primrose is Tavistock Street, it has been a while that we have had local issues raised at that level, because on the ongoing ASB issues, street drinking which are having a big impact. Tavistock is full of small local businesses that are hugely impacted by low level crime, because of the severity when you add it all up, we have dedicated a response to it. So every morning when the FDM is chaired, we will ask the question what does our footprint look like on Tavistock Street and it may be that we divert other Force resources to support the local shops there. It is not all upon us but with the BID and CSP, for example there on Tavistock Street, there is a Sainsburys and Sainsburys did employ a security guard to support the overarching holistic approach.

The PCC stated will the force be looking at other areas for this approach as well? Or is this only going to happen on Tavistock street?

SB stated at the moment it is only on Tavistock Street, and their other initiatives that the OPCC have been great supporters of in terms of 'Safer Streets', we have Midland Road and Luton as well. But we do have to have exit strategies, we can use some of the resources and some of the financial support to Police that area, but we can't do that all the time. So that's when we work with the businesses and the local authority in terms of what does that longer term strategy look like. Simple things have happened, on Tavistock Street there is a wall that a lot of the drinkers were sitting on and it was a case of removing the wall, so they can't sit there. Simple solutions like this can make a long term difference.

The CC stated that we match our response to the threat, harm and risk on a specific case, so if it is creating a lot of harm or risk or loss then we will escalate our response.

2.4 Update on Specials in community-based posts

The PCC asked what update is there in regards to having specials in Community based posts?

PW stated the Force completed the review of specials, we were looking at the model in terms of deployment and we have moved to a model where we are asking all of our specials in their first 12 months to become suitable for independent patrol. Once they are suitable for independent patrol, they will choose if they want to be in response or community. At the moment we have 53 specials in line to community policing. Predominantly they are north and central, we have very few in the south, so the Force is looking at how we can attract individuals from those areas that are not showing to want to be in community posts. PW confirmed what the Force hasn't done in this moment in time is do a particularly focused recruitment, in terms of 'come and join our neighbourhoods'. PW confirmed that the Force is just working on how that looks, making sure we get the balance right and expectations of 'yes you may want to work in X neighbourhood but we want you to do 12 months to get your IPS, before we move you in to their'.

PW stated the Force are going to run the campaigns, hopefully we see more people wanting to work in Luton community team, once that settles we will then look at doing a focussed program on neighbourhood specials.

The PCC stated that his understanding is that we currently have 120/130 specials, 53 of those are in community and response. It was previously discussed about having some specialisms being brought in to the Special constabulary at some point. The CC agreed and informed the PCC that we currently have some in specialisms now, so we have at least one in CAVA, and he believes there are some other specialisms we have got employed as well. PW stated we have some in RPU and this links to once you have your independent patrol status, we are happy if the specials tell the Force where they want to go. So other examples are PVP, Cyber, RPU are all the areas we are looking to add to our footprint.

The CC stated that for instance the individual we have in PVP, she has specialist skills, she is a social worker at the moment, so she expressed a desire to operate in that area, so we fast tracked her into there because, she already had independent patrol status.

The PCC asked if the board were aware of other forces which have opened up specialisms to the special constabulary? The CC stated there will be some. CK stated there were others. CK stated the bit we do not understand is the hours they put in, which screams concern as we do not understand the value of the special constabulary. So we know there are 128 operational specials but we do not know how many hours they do.

The CC stated that the Force do know this information.

PW confirmed that we have them manually, we capture it manually, we do not capture it on a system, so that we can easily press a button to review it all. PW stated so manually we go through and work out the hours that have been completed. The CC stated that they can tell CK if it is operational or if it is admin, but the CC does not have this information to hand.

CK stated she is not sure the Force does this, as she does not believe it is worth someone doing that manual check. The CC stated it is got from the duty sheets. CK confirmed that she was told by PW that Specials do not use duty sheets. PW stated they do not use sheets due to CARMs coming in, but the Force doesn't have a report on CARMs that allows us to have the information. CK stated that why she does not believe the Force has it reporting anywhere, which is why she is asking do the Force understand the value before and after the model change. The CC stated that he has seen this information somewhere.

PW asked for this to be set as an action to find and understand this information.

ACTION: PW to find and review information regarding hours that have been completed by the Special Constabulary before and after the model change and the value the special constabulary brings and to see the contribution of the Special Constabulary now and then what is the Force ambition to what they want to get it back to for September Strategic Board. CK stated the Force needs to understand how much pain was caused by the last bit and how it is going to be rectified.

The DCC stated that we will need to factor in that some of the hours before weren't against activity we would want them to be doing, it is not a pure numerical comparison. PW stated he believes this is the interesting bit, what we are seeing as a result of the model, is a level of time or proportion people are spending on patrol has increased significantly and things like special events where people are self-deploying have dropped down quite considerably.

CK stated so we know that but we can't pull the hours off, this is what is causing her confusion. CK stated she understands the point, so whatever is in the new model that you would want for night time economy, you could compare that against before couldn't you? CK stated perhaps do not do the whole hours in total then, let's do the comparison against the model.

PW stated what he does know that we can't press a button and get this information. The PCC asked if this can be sorted out? PW confirmed it is currently being sorted and will sorted by the end of September.

The PCC asked if the exec were aware of intakes of specials coming in? PW confirmed that the next intake is in September. The PCC asked if he would be able to come and see the new intake. The CC confirmed this would be welcomed.

2.5 Next Steps Programme

CK stated this was the ask from the OPCC to the Force to try and support the programme of it, take up isn't good and CK understands the difference between the paperwork of doing an arrest and a different caution, but the OPCC have asked Youturn to put together a shorter briefing and if it is ok with the exec can we try and get the briefing out across teams across the Force as CK believes this may help.

SB stated that he has spoken to [REDACTED] and he is fully supportive. This isn't dissimilar to what others are doing, so it shouldn't be an issue. The only observation is within the narrative of it. It states 'no offence is out of scope', technically not an offence but any DA related matter wouldn't be. CK asked if SB would like us to amend that then before sending out. The CC asked for tit to be taken off. Agreed.

ACTION: Youturn briefing to be amended by OPCC to remove 'no offence is out of scope' and then to be sent out and Exec to encourage teams to review and use.

The PCC asked what is the volume at present? CK stated under 20 since the start of May. The DCC stated there has been a real challenge with this, as when it was due to be launched, there was going to be in person training right at the start of Covid-19. CK stated there was also a change of lead, so it needs to be rebuilt. The PCC would like to be monitored throughout the next quarter. CK confirmed that this would be done as part of our oversight.

2.6 Complaints Dip Sampling Feedback

CK confirmed that this links directly with KB as we want to start bringing this information to you on a quarterly basis to you. CK stated it has been noticed that complaints are being assigned to individuals that have just started on their four off, which is obviously a concern, as the complainant believes that something is happening within those four days and it isn't and then they are disappointed when we get to day five, when they speak to someone who is only just received it in there intray, its not their fault, that's a theme. CK stated we are really pleased with the way that PSD are interacting with the OPCC, they are very good on getting the information back etc, so no overall concerns but really worth us continuing in this style of, 'what has come up'.

KB raised concerns surrounding how low dissatisfactions are being logged on the CRT database. KB is currently having discussions with CRT management to ensure that VCOP failings can be linked in with the CRT dip sampling. KB has made a few suggestions to the CRT management and they are being considered over the next couple of weeks. It's a simple suggestion of linking a complaint to a VCOP failing by adding a hashtag so trends can be gathered in the reports that are already on the database, i.e #VCOP1, so the exec and the OPCC can see failings of VCOP which have led to a VCOP complaint.

The CC stated that he believes this to be really useful, you can see the trends and the location, so we can feed that into the community teams and do some expectation management and comms around it.

CK stated that the Dip Sampling will continue in September to bring data to the exec, however the work surrounding VCOP will also continue.

ITEM 3 – PERFORMANCE FOCUS

3.1 Crime performance figures with restricted detail

The PCC stated he has reviewed the report and he has a few questions. He has looked at the Stalking and Harassment figures which is showing an increase, its going up, what are the Force doing about that? CK stated the solved rate is good for it but we want to see why it is going up?

SB stated that it is a good news story as the Force want people to report stalking and harassment, as previously it has been one of those underreported offences, in that sense it is a good news story. SB stated what we have in terms of our response to stalking and harassment is that we have a dedicated thematic DI Lead, who works across the board, in terms of that support, the outcomes, partnership arena with Victim Care. At the last Performance Board we had a spot light feature on stalking and harassment. The CC stated that he believes the force were underutilising some of the powers available to us which we have refocussed some activity around this under [REDACTED], so we are starting to see an uplift in some of that.

The PCC stated that he didn't see anything on ASB but do the exec have any specific points to bring to his attention of work being completed across the County?

SB stated that ASB is managed through the community teams and safety net is the system that manages those cases. [REDACTED] from community manages that, SB stated he does not have this as a feature in the Force performance board, but if the PCC wants a quarterly report on ASB and activity and action and headlines we can provide this. CK asked if we would get that within the demand paper? The CC stated that it would feature as a trend on the demand paper what that wouldn't do is articulate against what the force is doing. It can be provided.

The PCC stated this would help him with the narrative when he is speaking with councillors who raise complaints and issues round ASB and the type that would not be severe enough to have a response or lead to an arrest, it would be good to have some narrative what is happening around ASB, especially now we are coming out of lockdown. The CC asked whether or not the PCC would like a paper in October as this may fit nicely going in to Halloween and bonfire night. Within the paper we can talk about the Force overall approach to ASB , the system we use to utilise action, we can give case studies of what the Force do within that. We can also highlight all the different types of ASB and the proposed activity to what we are going to do for those spikes in activity.

ACTION: The Exec team to provide a report for ASB in October and every quarter after specifically on ASB, which will cover the Force overall approach to ASB , the system the Force use to utilise action, case studies of what the Force do within that. The Force can also highlight all the different types of ASB and the proposed activity to what the Force are going to do for those spikes in activity.

CK asked for the following to be mentioned in the public session, the positive around 30% reduction in Burglary residential from April, as we knew that the figures may have reduced due to Covid-19, but even now after lockdown etc that is really good.

ITEM 4 – CC UPDATE

4.1 Verbal Update

The CC stated he has already touched on the airport dispute previously in the meeting, so he won't go over this aspect again. The CC wanted to sight the PCC and OPCC at Strat but probably with an additional briefing outside of strategic board, the Force have concluded there FQIP review on the Force Control Centre. The CC stated some headlines from the review were:

- Resource investment – to meet the increasing demand that we have seen over a period of time and the projected demand we can see in the future, because of the budget demand that is going to be in the short term and at least some police officer investment for the FCC. The CC expects this to start around November/December time this year with three or four a month going in up to a number of about 16. At the same time we have the dual recruitment to get up to establishment, as we have continually run below establishment in

there, which is a historical problem. But we do recognise we need some resource investment to address the short term performance pressures that the Force has.

- We are also changing the graded response model to be more aligned to the current national operation and our responses will go from the fixed model that we currently use to a one to five graded system, which enables a greater degree of comparison. This will give us an easier view of risk because the challenge that we have at the moment is its either fast or fixed and if everything is fast then it is difficult to understand what the genuine emergencies are in there.
- Shift Patterns will be reviewed, which is a constant theme really.
- Tech uplift that we need to do as well, around the implementation of things like CRM etc.

This has been similar in any control had by the CC, but we are trying to try an approach that fixes this now for a sustainable period of time and enables us to progress with the call handling function and it will get it to the 21st century, it enables to be a modern service that meets the need of the people in various different ways. What we have seen and most recently the big bulge we have seen is levelling off a little bit now in the last two weeks. But the increase the Force has seen in particular three nines, has knock on consequences for our ability to handle the 101s efficiently. We have to prioritise answering the 999s which means we take away some of the resource capability for the 101s. The force has pushed really hard for web chat through Covid, which has been great but the consequence of that is rather than necessarily diverting calls from 101, the 101s remain stable but the web chat has grown. So the Force has created an additional channel rather than absorbing demand from elsewhere which the Force didn't anticipate. The CC stated it is going to be gradual approach and the Force will keep reviewing it as they go along, to make sure they get the right level of resource investment in there. With starting to move police officers in there, we can increase capacity in there without impacting on the budget.

CK asked about the abandoned 999s in July being 555, she has never seen this. The CC stated he does not like the phrase 'abandoned 999s' as it isn't abandoned as the Force will always call them back, the Force will always contact the 999s. The CC stated that the abandoned 101s is the concern as the Force do not know what the risk is there. The PCC stated we are unable to determine out of the abandoned 101s that have hung up and have gone onto the webchat. That would still be classed as an abandoned call as they have hung up. The CC stated it would show as an abandoned call on 101. The caller that has called and hung up and not contacted us via other means is the concern as this is the risk we are not aware of, it's the missed risk with that. The CC stated interestingly our calls to 101 in comparison to other forces, such as Police Scotland had 40% of their 101 calls abandoned, which Beds is nowhere near that and there is a huge call handling pressure right across the country, where we have seen a big increase in 999s and 101 demand with no particular reason. Whether it is that we 10 Million more people in the country that have not gone on holiday and they are slightly less tolerant of their neighbours as they have been living in close proximity to them in the last 18 months, the CC does not know what the rationale is for it, but there has been a national increase in demand, which has impacted our 101 call handling ability as we need to focus on the 999s first.

The PCC asked how many officers will be in the control room?

The CC stated when we get to 15 we will review the position, because we have got nine from the intake which are in training now going in there and they will land in October. It will be three months until they are operationally independent, subject to their tutoring period in there. We have another intake of ten that starts with us in November of Police Staff, but we are 20 vacancies short of police staff at the moment, so that just gets us to an establishment position. Now to achieve our ability in growth and demand, there is a substantial number of additional staff they need that we cannot afford, so we are stating that we will get you to the establishment level, we will plan to put some police resource in there to supplement that, albeit they will need to be trained also, but we won't do is put too many in there and have to take them out. It will be an incremental approach, we will have three to four a month starting from November and there will be an ongoing review. The CC believes there will not be a requirement to go beyond 15, providing we can maintain the police staff establishment.

The PCC asked do the exec know what impact this will have in other areas of business? The CC stated it will be a challenge, some of the anticipated growth we were going to have elsewhere landing in other parts of the organisation to alleviate pressures elsewhere, will now not be going to those places, they will be going to FCC.

The PCC asked will this be done by the end of the financial year? The CC stated we will keep it under review as we do it and we need to track the demand, the demand is unpredictable at the moment, but we anticipate growth and demand as we shift online. The PCC stated so the 20 vacancies which need to be filled should be by when? The CC stated they should be, but they never have been, there has been constant vacancies and drop outs. The CC stated if no one dropped out then we should be at full establishment by the end of the financial year and operating effectively. The DCC stated the force are pushing to be better at anticipating the attrition so that the Force is effectively aiming to over recruit to offset that.

ACTION: The CC stated that the exec will take the PCC through the FQIP review as it is really worth going through the detail, as it is a really important part of business for us. Date to be put into diary for this to be completed – two hours plus needed.

CK stated that the Force previously ran on this strategy and it stopped. The CC stated it stopped due to having to take money out of the budget and this may have to happen again depending on what the CSR is. The PCC asked for more detail on the IT aspect. The CC stated this could be simple things like ensuring our extensions link up properly and are up to date, the force is putting things on the internal voice router people are going to the right place. Through to something called the CRM system which assists our identification of risk, as a call is received it highlights name from number and history of caller, i.e has called 15 times in the last month relating to DA as it is ringing on the screen. So that is the caller recognition management piece, that lots of Forces have but Beds does not and we need to make a good investment to achieve that. The PCC asked why we don't have this, is it because of the money? The CC confirmed it was because the Force cannot afford it.

GC stated that currently not budget for, is that going to be a part of the budget conversation for next year and onwards? The CC stated it will be and the Force is just looking into it because its systems, interfaces, what's available, links with Athena, links with Storm and what is available on the market and how expensive is it, as you can spend however much you want which can do all types of different things for you or you can get a fairly basic one and the CC believes we will have a fairly basic one.

The PCC asked that stage would we be able to have a business case for how we anticipate the impact, in terms of the quality of experience that residents will have. The CC stated when we get to that point that will be factored in.

The CC also wanted to mention within his update the terrible events in Plymouth. The Force has done some work to assure ourselves around our firearms licensing process across BCH. Firearms licensing enquiries is a collaborated function. We have 35090 firearms licenses across BCH. In Bedfordshire we have 7756 of those Bedfordshire ones, we had 21 surrendered in the last 12 months. The CC explained that when he states surrendered, that's when the Force will invite you to surrender your license, an example of this is that we are called to a DA offence or something at your address. The Force will invite you to surrender your license for a period of time whilst we make appropriate checks to see if you are suitable to have that restored to you. Of the 21 that had been surrendered, we have returned 17 of those. We have refused the grant of two applications, we have not revoked any of those that had been surrendered, but it may be that some have been permanently surrendered. The Force is satisfied that they are compliant with the national guidance on that. Just for an extra layer of satisfaction for ourselves of the 17 that have been returned from the 21 that were surrendered, we have run open source intelligence checks on all of those 17, in the interim period, because that was the weakness that was identified in the Plymouth case, The CC stated he is satisfied there is nothing of concern from those 17 that were returned. The CC stated there is going to be minor tweaks to processes, to tighten things up for us and this will give us a greater degree of assurance. But the Force is satisfied there are compliant with the national guidance.

The PCC asked this will affect new applicants?

The CC stated if you are a new applicant, the grant process is much stricter than the renewal piece, so we are satisfied that the grant process is pretty sound at the moment anyway and I think we do already a degree of medical checks before we grant anyway and not all Forces do that. We have quite a thorough and comprehensive firearms licensing grant process, so the grant process is better, what we can't do at the moment is do open source checks to the level of detail that we would like for all of the grant applications that we get. If we were going to do this, this would require resource investment.

CK asked if the Force visit on the ones that have been given it back? CK remembers it changed twice in the past, but cannot recall what is the current practice. The CC stated what he believes the Force do, visit on grants, we would visit on surrender and what we went away from was renewal and this was an online assurance for renewal.

GC stated to add assurance, he believes the auditors are liaising with PW now on scope, we are looking to get an internal audit across BCH, to be able to share learning in or best practice.

ITEM 5 – LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE

5.1 Chief Constable Complaints

CK confirmed that there are no new complaints.

CK stated that the email that was received which was addressed to the Chief (OPCC CC'd in), is not being classed as a CC complaint as no allegations were made against the CC. CK stated she believes that everything surrounding this is in hand.

5.2 Reviews

No reviews have been upheld for this month, however there are two that are still ongoing.

5.3 Culture Update

CK was asking for the evaluation for the welfare measures that were brought in. PW stated what the force is doing at the moment, we are about to launch a bimonthly newsletter, which will continue to push the message out about the culture, it will cover what we have done, what we haven't done etc. In April/May 2022 which is a year since we instigated the culture work we will run the exact same surveys, focus groups and interviews again to see what the position is over the year, to get a better understanding and we will continue to do this the whole way through. What we are not going to do, what we have done previously as an organisation is say we are looking to change the culture, we review it once, and its ok and it is deemed to be good enough and then we stop, this will be a continued evaluation throughout the process.

CK asked if the Force will be doing any evaluation regarding the two roles which the Force has put in in Luton and Kempston, in terms of volume of appointments taken up, how long it takes someone to get back to a healthy place, whether that person feels that they are in a healthy place at the end. This is the type of evaluation that the OPCC does with the Counselling Foundation, there is no data or people, but they tell us if they think they have achieved or not in the time they have been able to work with someone.

PW stated that the two roles will be evaluated as part of the OH review, we are constantly looking at what we are getting from those roles and are they delivering, we are constantly getting feedback around those roles which the exec will continue to do and a part of the OH review this will be done as well. CK asked how it is looking? Are people responding? Are the appointments being filled up? PW stated in terms of demand for the service, it is extremely high, what the Force is trying to do is to review, what people use them for, in terms of what we employ them to do, which is pretty much that bit around, having a confidential conversation with these people instead of referring to OH. So there is a triage between

the organisation and OH, we have been doing that and getting some good feedback around that and Cambs and Herts are also looking as part of the OH review if they need something similar to the roles that Beds have put in place.

The PCC stated has the Force looked into the location of these services, the rooms are good however if I was an officer and I wanted to talk to someone and the access to this space was in a location where anyone can see me walking in and out of that, I might not feel so comfortable about using that space, if there was somewhere off site it might be more comfortable.

The CC stated we have tried to deliberately put the rooms away from the main thorough affairs would be, so not in the response corridor, so it out of the obvious areas so you can duck in. To go off sight would provide a degree of confidentiality however it would take away the impromptu accessibility of it. Like if it was off site you would need to make an appointment, but if you are walking by and see the rooms empty you can go in there. The PCC stated that he can see the pros and cons either way, it may be worthwhile as part of the evaluation, to talk to the user and ask the question which would of you preferred at the station or somewhere offsite. Discussions were had surrounding where the rooms are based and access used by operational officers, everywhere within a station could be classed as a thorough affair, but the Force has tried to put the rooms in the less busy parts of the station.

CK stated it would be interesting to see what the users think in terms of location

The PCC asked PW when is he going to get this evaluation report? PW asked when the PCC would want it. The PCC asked how long has it been running? The CC stated they have been in post now a couple of months. PW requested clarification what the PCC would like the report on? The PCC confirmed that he would like the evaluation to be over welfare overall, the roles would be a part of the evaluation as the roles were designed as part of the welfare piece specifically. The PCC asked to allow the individuals some more time to bed in and he would like the evaluation paper at the beginning of the new year January/February time. PW stated he believes this will be a good time to do it as he will be able to let the PCC know the feedback form HMIC to.

ITEM 6 – QUARTERLY REPORTING EFFICIENCY

6.1 Finance Paper (include reserve)

PW went through his presentation.

PW stated at this time of year, what we try and do around July/August is try and give ourselves an understanding what the next three years are going to look like . As you know that is really difficult , as we have no idea what the SR is, we have no idea what pay awards look like, however we start to make some educated assumptions around this. But before we look at the future years, we need to look at where we are in the current year.

Slide 1

2021/22 Financial year Projections

- *Estimated underspend of £1.755M presented to the last OPCC Board.*
- *Caveat that we will receive £1.3M income via grant to cover lost income at Luton Airport.*
- *Benefitting from two special police grants*
- *Unknowns about spending review & pay awards*
- *Review in Autumn*
- *Capital programme relies on borrowing*
- *£2.1M transfer from earmarked reserve to capital reserve*

Slide 2

Baseline Assumption in February 2021

- *Uplift funding will pay for additional officers between 2022/23 & 2023/24*
- *Police grant & Pension grant will remain unchanged*

- Council Tax will increase by 1.99% in each of the future years.
- Tax base will increase by 2% in each of the future years.
- Staff & Officers will not receive a pay award in Sept 2021, future pay awards from Sept 2022 onwards will return to 2%
- 1.5% Inflation for non staff costs.
- Growth & savings assumed at £2.2M and £1.5M respectively.
- Use of Budget Reserve in 2023/24 and 2024/25

Slide 3

What has changed since February

- We have assumed that the Police Grant will rise in order to fund Uplift Officers recruited in 2021/22
- Savings have been removed to show the true shortfall in funding.
- We have not included any use of the budget reserve.
- The growth position has been reviewed and sits at £4.4M in 2022/23 (of which £2.1M relates to uplift pay costs for which a corresponding increase has been included in Police Grant)
- We have received Special grant funding for Operation Costello

Slide 4

Medium Term Plan 2022/23 to 2025/26

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Projected Net Budget before savings	133,498	135,124	137,115	139,536
Expected Funding	131,020	133,081	135,386	137,617
Shortfall	2,478	2,043	1,729	1,919
Reverse Contribution to Reserves	-843	0	0	0
Use of Budget Reserve	0	0	0	0
Budget shortfall	1,635	2,043	1,729	1,919

Slide 5

What can Impact the Medium Term Plan

- Continuation Funding for the Special Police Grant for both Operation Boson & Costello.
- Will the collection fund recover? Any loss will put us in a worse funding position.
- The Taxbase (i.e. number of households paying Council Tax) saw a drop last year. We are working on a 2% increase each year, this equates to approx. £1M.
- The level of Council Tax
- The outturn position in 2021/22
- Pay awards
- Will the "Income Loss Recovery Grant" continue in 2021/22?

Slide 6

MTP (£12 Council Tax in 2022/23)

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Projected Net Budget before savings	133,498	136,779	138,837	141,327
Expected Funding	132,675	134,803	137,177	139,479
Shortfall	823	1,976	1,660	1,848
Reverse Contribution to Reserves	843	0	0	0
Use of Budget Reserve	0	0	0	0
Budget shortfall		1,976	1,660	1,848
Budget surplus	20			

Slide 7

Growth

Included at this stage:

- Full year effect of 2021/22 officers appointed via uplift grant (assumed to be funded through police grant)
- Incremental drift as staff & officers progress through the pay stages.
- Unachieved savings from 2021/22
- Revenue cost of borrowing
- National Police Air Service
- Motor Insurance Premiums
- Reducing level of POCA income
- Contributions to National projects

Slide 8

Table of Shortfalls

	2022/23 £'M	2023/24 £'M	2024/25 £'M	2025/26 £'M
Baseline	1.635	2.043	1.729	1.919
Scenario 1	0.020 (surplus)	1.976	1.660	1.848
Scenario 2	2.632	3.100	2.851	3.106
Scenario 3	0.020 (surplus)	1.976	2.775	1.892

These figures are not cumulative, the Table assumes the shortfalls will be found each year.

Baseline 1.99% each year

Scenario One £12 in 2022/23 & 1.99% onwards

Scenario Two 0% each year

Scenario Three £12 in 2022/23, 1.99% in 2023/24, 0% in 2024/25 & 1.99% in 2025/26

Slide 9

Projected Use of Reserves

Year end 31st March	2021 (Actual)	2022 (forecast)	2023 (forecast)	2024 (forecast)	2025 (forecast)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
General Reserves					
Police Fund	3,000	3,843	3,843	3,843	3,843
Earmarked Reserves					
Force Earmarked Reserves	2,773	0	0	0	0
Budget Reserve	3,055	3,055	3,055	3,055	3,055
Road Safety Reserve	753	120	0	0	0
Insurance Reserve	1,132	1,132	1,132	1,132	1,132
Kenova Reserve	1,654	0	0	0	0
Sixhills Reserve	85	0	0	0	0
Capital Expenditure Reserve	0	2,100	2,100	2,100	2,100
Total	12,452	10,250	10,130	10,130	10,130

Slide 10

In summary

- *As you would expect there are still a lot of “unknowns” at this stage and assumptions could be incorrect*
- *We had a lot of support from the Government in 2020/21 in the form of grants to tackle Covid, we don't know if this will be repeated in 2021/22.*
- *We will lose almost £1.0M in funding compared to our original estimate if the number of households paying council tax remains at 2021-22 levels.*
- *How do we find savings while trying to increase officer numbers?*
- *Savings over the Medium Term are likely to be centre around service delivery reductions rather than savings but will need to be viewed against the national priority of increasing officer numbers*
- *A lot of hard work still to do and potentially difficult decisions to make*

The CC stated he wanted to raise one, as he didn't know if anyone was aware and it surrounds the risk management approach in terms of the insurance, we are looking to make ourselves a more insurable entity though the work we have been doing through Surpic, we have been shortlisted for the European risk management awards. We will be going to the award ceremony with our insurers in November.

CK stated that she has not received a paper for 6.2 - Demand Paper. As we have not received a paper since February. It has been confirmed this was not due this month, it is due in October. PW confirmed that it is completed six monthly.

ACTION: Add demand paper onto the November Agenda for Strategic Board.

ITEM 7 – COLLABORATION

7.1 Risks and Key Updates from the Force to OPCC if any

CK stated that the only significant risk that has been raised to the OPCC is HR and vetting. CK stated that she appreciates that a lot of money was taken out a long time ago and it seems to be over the last nine months they have become worse.

The CC stated that vetting backlog is healthier now than its been in a long time, the vetting piece should not be an issue, we have an AI response in vetting now working on the back log as well. The vetting robots work 24/7, so that is continually improving. CK stated there is a compulsory order in at the minute, that all officers need to be completed first and then they will start other staff. The CC stated that the Force can prioritise things going through the process as well, but the reason why officers have been prioritised is because we want to achieve the uplift program. CK understands that however is there a possibility for the robots to split it 80% officers and the other 20% be other staff, as CK wonders how this is working out in other areas where you are still employing police staff to go through. The CC stated that we can reprioritise areas, he has CK to let him know and he will contact vetting. The CC stated that the backlogs in vetting are lower than they have been in a long time. OH appears to be the sticking point that remains. CK stated that HR process at the minute is a stress for all managers, the CC stated that there is all sorts of problems with HR, some of it related to sickness, some of it related to vacancies and some of it due to systemic process issues and a part of the various stages of review. The CC stated that the Force is underinvested in HR, with what we are asking for them to deliver with such as uplift, PEQF transition. CK stated she understands that, however this has been an issue for a number of months and she did not know if there was an issue with working from home, is it working or is it something else?

The CC stated that he believes there is some issues around vacancies and people leaving, and struggling to replace them as well, so this would be compounding it more recently. CK stated ok, so nothing going on to look at that? The CC confirmed that there is lots going on looking at it but its just a difficult picture in there at the moment, which we have to work our way through and it will take time.

ITEM 8 - AOB

8.1 Information Management Updates

CK stated there were no significant issues for 8.1 – no concerns.

8.2 High Risk Domestic Address Visits – Bobby Scheme

CK stated that she would be able to take this item offline with SB, as they have a catch up soon anyway, so we can move to the public agenda.

Next Meeting: 30th September 2021.