



## POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR BEDFORDSHIRE STRATEGIC BOARD MINUTES

1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2021

<b>Confirmed with</b>	<b>Festus Akinbusoye, Police and Crime Commissioner (FA)</b>
	<b>Garry Forsyth, Chief Constable (GF)</b>
	<b>Clare Kelly, Chief Executive, OPCC (CK)</b>
	<b>Sharn Basra, Assistant Chief Constable (SB)</b>
	<b>Rachael Glendenning, Staff Officer A Division (RG)</b>
	<b>Gavin Chambers, CFO for the OPCC (GC)</b>
	<b>Phil Wells, CFO for the Force (PW)</b>
	<b>Madelyn Doggrell, Staff Officer A Division (MD)</b>
	<b>Katie Beaumont, Transparency Manager (KB)</b>
	<b>Gemma McCormack – Executive Assistant (GM) - Minutes</b>

### Part 2

FA welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. FA advised that this meeting will be live streamed after the event and uploaded onto Facebook. Comments from the public will be very welcome and will be responded to as soon as possible.

### **ITEM 9. OPCC UPDATES**

#### **9.1 Police and Crime Plan Engagement Plan:**

FA updated regarding the Police and Crime Plan and said that so far so good thanks to the excellent work of the office ahead of me coming into this role and quite a lot of the plans have already been put in place as far as the Police and Crime Plan is concerned. We are now able to go to public consultation which is a requirement of all Police and Crime Commissioners on the 5<sup>th</sup> July. The plan is that we will be going live in August which was then run for the course of the three years of this term. A lot of the items that you will see in there are what I have been talking about for the past 15 months. We are certainly very determined that we are delivering on the people's Policing priorities working very closely with and in partnership with the Senior Officers in Bedfordshire Police. I am very happy with how it is going so far.

CK added that as per the Commissioners direction we want to get the survey out to as many member of the public, different community groups and individuals as we can. It will run until the 6<sup>th</sup> August 2021 but that is not the end of the consultation, we will just do a different version and then go back out to specific community groups who will help us to make sure that the language in it is accessible and that it is a real plan for the people by the people.

### **ITEM 10. COMMUNITY POLICING**

#### **10.1 Community Policing Model:**



SB advised that the community policing model is based around two functions; one is the local Community Hubs and within there we have Police Officers and PCSO's, including Officers of different ranks. The current establishment of that area with regards to Police Officers is 67 and we are currently running at 64 against that 67. In the Hub base there are 3 gaps but what we have got is a postings meeting coming up and we are confident that the 67 will be up to full strength by September 2021 at the latest. That Community Hub model doesn't deal with all the policing on its own in isolation as what we have got to support them are other teams such as Rural Crime Team, Community Enforcement Team, Community Cohesion, Mental Health Hub and Hate Crime. It is a collective approach to community policing but the Hub is the core part to it. Included within those Officers are our Dedicated Police Now Students who really focus on problem solving and different areas in consideration within problem solving are specific to community policing. They add great value in terms of that longer term solution. We have also got, in terms of initiatives and changes to support community policing, is we have changed our Special Constabulary Model and we have aligned some of those resources to our Community Hubs as well. Sometimes Specials, because of the excellent work that they do on top of their day to day lives, is often that they provide that policing presence out of hours so we have aligned those to the Hubs as well.

In terms of supporting visibility and engagement with our local communities; one is the pilot of the Social Media Academy which will be piloted within community policing and looking at how we can make better use of social media to support and showcase some of the work that we are doing. Also, the reintroduction of our Community Vision Days which were hugely successful in terms of focussing on different areas at different times and saturating that area. This is not just in terms of policing presence but raising awareness of certain issues and priorities bespoke to that local area.

FA shared I am always pleased when I hear special constables mentioned. What reassurance can you give around deployment for Officers to the community policing teams? Are we going to be having those Officers primarily just dedicated to community policing or what is the likelihood of them being deployed elsewhere? I understand that there may be operational demands but are we going to have them only dedicated to community policing? Also, what have we decided that community policing is going to be in Bedfordshire?

SB responded that if you look at our dedication for those resources and FA you have been really visible and active with going out and visiting all of our teams across the organisation, you will see that we have got some stretched teams but our dedication is across the board and we continue prioritise neighbourhood policing. We understand and agree when we speak with our communities through our campaign of 'Have Your Say', what those local priorities are. We are committed to dealing with those priorities aligned to the Hubs and those Officers will be dedicated to that type of response. Sometimes emergencies and critical incidents dictate that we move resources but our bottom line is that we will prioritise community policing and provide that neighbourhood response.

FA asked, for the benefit of those who may be listening, what would community policing look like to our residents?

SB explained that it is twofold, one is the Hub focus in terms of local footprint for local areas. We can't have visibility in terms of all areas and every Ward throughout the County so we have identified core Hubs from where our community policing will be based, patrol and provide reassurance in those areas. Much of this will come through demand as well but what we have also done to support that is our response function, they have outposts as well so our response function, although predominantly based North and South, they will have Satellite stations where they are deployed from to add that visibility. In terms of what it looks like, we are getting as close as we can possibly get to having local Officers who know their local area and are available and accessible to our local communities

GF advised that when it comes to the issue of extractions, we have invested significantly in our neighbourhood policing function and I did make that as one of my areas of focus throughout my selection process and on my appointment and it remains an incredibly important part of our policing posture in Bedfordshire. This is something that I am deeply committed to and seek as an ex-neighbourhood Police Officer and is something that I recognise is very important to the



public and it is very important to me. I like to think of it as the foundation stone of our policing model as this is usually where the first interaction between the Police and community takes place and it is crucial to having good relationships which often provides good information and good intelligence which then enables us to lay on all the other capabilities that are so essential to us delivering across the board. The abstraction points around that, because we have invested in it we should be in a position where we don't need to abstract but we also know that we are the Police, we are an Emergency Service and we are Police Officers first and Specialists second. If there is something that is an emerging emergency that requires the abstraction of a Police Officer then of course we will have to do that. There is often a discussion around what a Neighbourhood Officer might think of an abstraction and what I might think of as an abstraction because I don't view them responding to an emergency in a locality where they are based as necessarily being an abstraction. What we shouldn't be doing is taking a Neighbourhood Officer from Dunstable and then deploying them to a job in Kempston, it will happen in extremities but otherwise should not be happening. Anything that is happening on the beat of a Neighbourhood Officer should be of concern and interest to them, I think it is important for us to utilise them in that locality.

In terms of what neighbourhood policing looks like, there is a recognised model for what neighbourhood policing is and it is called the 'Seven Pillars of Neighbourhood Policing'. What the public should be seeing with the good delivery of neighbourhood policing is they should get; Engaging Communities, Solving Problems and Targeting Activity. What I want is Police Officers who are known and recognisable to the local community they are working in as Neighbourhood Officers, I want them to be knowledgeable about the things that are taking place and the activity and criminality that is taking place in that area. I want them to be skilled and equipped to provide sustainable policing interventions, so I don't want us just to be responding to demand all the time, I want us to be getting upstream and putting in targeted interventions which mean we can turn off some of the demand we are experiencing later on in the policing model. They should be working absolutely hand in glove with the community to address the local concerns that they have got as well as addressing some of the strategic and practical priorities that we have identified as an Organisation. It is very much the front line interface with the public and operational problem solvers who are highly skilled, highly equipped and highly motivated. The most important thing for me is, neighbourhood policing has sometimes been seen as a role that people didn't want to go in to. Now because we are building the capacity and providing the skills with our Officers we are in a position now where we have got people waiting to go into community policing which is exactly how I wanted it to be as this should be the flagship of our policing model and we should have amongst the best neighbourhood policing services in the Country

FA said that he had been out to visit some of the Community Hubs; Dunstable, Leighton Buzzard and Futures House in Luton. It really was nice to see Police Officers who wanted to be in the community and actually feel very, very invested in that part of policing. I look forward to seeing the unfolding and outcome of this community policing plan as from September 2021 onwards. There will be a further update at the Strategic Board in January 2022.

CK asked in relation to the vacancies, where are the vacancies at the moment?

SB advised that all 3 vacancies are in the South-Central area.

CK shared that we have been doing quite a few Road Shows with the different community groups and was noticing that these vacancies were popping up. At the last Strategic Board, we had an update that there was only one vacancy so I was just wondering what had happened there but I understand they will come in eventually and that there will be a full establishment very soon.

SB confirmed that we are looking at having a full establishment by September 2021.



<p>GF advised that sometimes we have a full establishment but what that doesn't translate to is necessarily a full establishment in all of the Hubs. We might be saying to you that we have a full establishment but when in fact we are over established in one location and under established in another so the overall establishment is fully populated but the local establishment necessarily isn't.</p> <p>CK mentioned that last time we had asked for names and we had them all named in the different areas so if it was the case that we were 'over established' would it not have shown on there?</p> <p>CK asked about the Website and said that at the community interaction meetings we were having, Councillors were saying to us that they build great relationships with the Community Officers but then, as is the nature of policing, people move on. What is not happening is that people are saying that they are moving on and they don't give those contact details to the incoming Officers. I wanted to go back to the Councillors and advise that they could always go on the Website and put in their postcode so that they can see who the contact is however, I tried this for myself on a few different areas and I was seeing names that I knew were not right in the area. I think if we are not going to be communicating with our Councillors and key individual networks then we need to be making sure that our outgoing communication is correct so that people have got that access back, I feel that this would be really important for community policing.</p> <p>FA advised that he understands that this is always a 'fluid' situation with people coming in and out and this will never be a stable situation or figure all of the time. I wanted to thank you for all of your efforts and focus in putting together this plan and I am excited to see this from September and whatever we can do to working with you and supporting you in making this much more of a success, I am totally in support of that</p>
<p><b>11.1 Victim Needs Analysis Update:</b></p>
<p>CK advised that this is around the PCC's commitment to the Victims Needs Analysis. We have found that there are over 20 different objectives in Bedfordshire that we need to do to make sure that we are being compliant with what people who are affected by crime need. We have now got all of those timetables so that they will be delivered by April 2022 and those updates will come here so that we can communicate them back to the public.</p>
<p><b>11.2 Signpost update:</b></p>
<p>CK updated that linked in with 11.1 is around the service that they get through Signpost which is the Hub for people who have been affected directly or indirectly i.e. a family member or relative who has seen someone go through a criminality experience and needs some support. For a long time, we were not at the rates that we wanted, last month we did finally get to the sort of rate that we would want which meant that Police Officers were making the right referrals into that service. It has dropped slightly but we are still in the right figures that we are wanting to look at. The good news in that area is the expansion so we are moving towards supporting people when they have been the victim of fraud as well as robbery. Eventually we will move that support service to those that have been affected by antisocial behaviour. At this time, as this is not a listed type that the service does, there isn't that support built out there but we are going to have that brought in eventually.</p>
<p><b>11.3 Victim Satisfaction in Force:</b></p>
<p>CK advised that we wanted a discussion around victim satisfaction in force, especially around VCOP and how we were doing with keeping people. VCOP is the Victim Code of Practice so this where we are all, within this system, making pledges with keeping people up to date and that they have fair access to information.</p> <p>SB updated regarding victim satisfaction, dissatisfaction and complaints, how the public can contact and also how as an organisation we always seek to make improvements.</p>



In terms of being a victim of crime, currently we have a system in place where we utilise internal resources to conduct surveys with our victims of crime. What we have noticed and identified is that we are not able to reach out (because of competing demands and capacity) to as many victims as possible to get that rich picture in terms of what that actually looks and feels like to our victims of crime. We are seeking to involve technology and are looking at IT solutions, no different to us when we buy something online then within seconds we can track back on our phones and leave some feedback, this is one of the areas of development for us.

In terms of dissatisfaction and complaints, members of the public can contact us through our Website and other forums. If you look at the Website there is a tile page under feedback and you can contact us highlighting three key things; How we did, Submitting and complaint and a Compliment. What happens with those is they come into the Customer Services Team who then identify whether it is a complaint, in which case it will be directed to our Professional Standards Department. If it is dissatisfaction they will record the details of that dissatisfaction. As part of that dissatisfaction it does take into account VCOP compliance i.e. if someone hasn't been updated in terms of an investigation or if there is dissatisfaction with levels of service. What happens there is that it is only identified as VCOP, the operator within the Customer Support Team emails and contacts both the Officer and Supervisor referencing the crime report and that is then aligned to VCOP compliance and the data extracts how supportive we are there. One of the issues we have identified and I am grateful for the OPCC, as we have Commissioned an internal audit in relation to our complaints and dissatisfaction handling, what is working okay/not okay and what next and those are the areas we want to learn from in terms of extracting that detail. Under VCOP there are 12 areas of real importance that we need to show and satisfy our victims of crime because we prioritised that victim experience and victim journey but at the moment we can only extract VCOP as a whole. Again, we are looking into IT systems that will be able to extract and breakdown this information which we can then look at for trends and learn from as an Organisation.

CK clarified that at the moment this information is not available but you are going to, once this is available then we would be able to look at how compliant the 12 areas are. When will you be able to share this level of information?

GF advised that we will need to liaise with the other Stakeholders before we can just say yes we will do it, whilst I would like to give you a timescale we need to have a conversation with our collaborated partners before we can.

CK queried that we say we are committed to VCOP but yet we can't actually give any evaluation against the 12 stages of VCOP?

GF confirmed that we are absolutely committed to VCOP but we can't just click our fingers as we have to go at the same pace our collaborative partners are going at. There is an easy way and a hard way, we would rather go the easy way but what I can't do is say that it will be done by this date as I can't plot the easy way to do it at this time.

FA asked if there are ongoing discussions with partners at the moment about this?

GF confirmed that there are indeed however there is a reluctance on behalf of one of our partners to proceed in that way at the moment which is part of the problem that we are experiencing. We will overcome that the easy way or the hard way as we are committed to VCOP.

CK stated that she can't understand why any partner would not want to do it as some of the 12 stages are simple things like giving a crime number

#### **11.4 Police Data trends including stop and search breakdown:**



SB updated that the stop search data is separated into quarterly data, we have just had quarter 4 come through and we utilise that both in Internal Scrutiny Panels and Externally Scrutiny Panels whereby we have partners and valued members of the community talking through the good, the bad and how we can improve and learn.

In terms of the National data, the disproportionately rates for black people being stop searched are 1 – 9 and Asian are 1 to 2.5. Where we are in quarter 4 is black is 1 to 1.577 and Asian is 1 to 3.41, what we appreciate and accept is that it is still not good enough and we have got to understand that detail more and also the impact. That range differs hugely within the County itself, we have a hugely diverse County and the three areas are very, very different. If I were to pick just black in isolation in Luton it is 1 to 2.68 whereas in Central Bedfordshire it is 1 to 12.68. As part of that Scrutiny Panel looking at the quarterly data we can identify which Officers utilised stop search the most, also which Officers are highlighted as one extreme or the other in terms of disproportionality, we would be able to identify if one Officer stop searched 25 people and 23 of those were from the Asian population. What we can also identify and overlay is the outcome, are some of our Officers stop searching and as a result of that there is no further action or are they positive stop searches in terms of the reasonable grounds as to why that stop search is being completed. What we do with that is at every quarter we want to learn and improve the way we do things. Chief Inspectors across the Organisation have conversations with those officers with a view of extracting what that looks like. It may be that one of our Officers was on a specific operation, in a specific area and that is proportionate in terms of the outcome. As a result of those conversations we then determine what happens, whether or not there is some learning to be taken out of that or can it be justified and that is then fed back to the Scrutiny Panel.

We have recently commissioned and delivered some training across the Organisation. The basis of that training was to reinforce and remind our Officers about the powers and the use of stop search, but also to understand what it felt like for members of our community to being stop searched and that had a huge impact on our Officers. In June we had record levels of stop searches in our hot spot areas which is really good. We need to review this data and look at any individuals to continue that learning. We have now got some really rich data for the whole year and what we are able to do is extract some of that and overlay it to other areas in terms of outcomes and reasons for stop search. We will move into that process next month in terms of really dissecting that data.

In terms of use of force, this is when an Officer even places handcuffs on someone, that is deemed as use of force, it is not always what some may think of in terms of using force. We identified that our understanding of this needed to improve so we put in some local measures to ensure that this is at the same standing as stop search. We have a dedicated Superintendent who leads on that portfolio and we review the similar data in terms of disproportionality, why and the outcomes. The next stage will then be that year data and we can then extract that to make sure that we can learn lessons and provide that reassurance to our public that we are using these powers both legitimately and professionally.

FA asked if we are able to drill down the data to the people themselves who are being stop searched for example, are we able to tell from the data if a particular individual has been stopped 5 times in a quarter.

SB confirmed that yes, we are able to do this.

FA asked are we having conversations with those people, especially if nothing has been found on them? Personally, I do not have a problem with someone being stopped multiple times when something is found on them because they are dangerous people and that needs to be addressed. For those who are stopped multiple times and nothing is found on them, no one is having the conversation with them about what is going on and why they have been searched. Are we able to put something in place for someone who finds themselves in that situation?



SB confirmed that we can extract that data but at this stage we are not utilising the data in that manner other than if they flag up in terms of those Officers who are stopping those people. There are two elements that we are working on and that is leaving material information with the person that is stop searched so that they can make contact and feedback about their experience. Similar to repeat victims of crime or people who are stop searched on a number of occasions, I will have a look into identifying how we can be proactive in approaching those individuals and maybe asking them to share their experience.

FA advised that from personal experience, when you have been stopped searched the last things you want to do is wait around for a piece of paper to be given to you. I don't believe this information is always given as often people will ask for it to be sent to an email address and maybe sometimes this doesn't happen. While we hope for the best I think we need to look at being more proactive in reaching out to people who have had these experiences. Maybe we could go to them to get their feedback.

GF advised that they have looked into a scheme that the Met have been looking at as well which enables this to an extent. It may not be the best scheme or it may be that we look at doing something locally ourselves. My ambition for stop and search would be, firstly it is a very important and useful operating tool for us, we see at first hand the number of weapons it takes off our streets and we know the consequence this can have in terms of preventing serious youth violence, if we stop one murdered through a stop and search then that is a fantastic result. I want all of our Officers to be confident in utilising stop and search but it is really important that our community are confident with our utilisation of stop and search as well. I do think that we have got really good scrutiny arrangements that give a degree of community confidence, the quality of our stop and search arrangements has gone up over 20% and there is very much a learning cycle. Nationally and locally there is unexplained disparity at the moment within the stop and search system and we know this has a significant impact on particularly our black communities which we need to address as well. There was a pledge that all Chief's signed up to in 2018 which was where we have unexplained disparities we should seek to understand it and then we should seek to explain it. We are about 80% of the way towards properly understanding our stop and search data and activity.

#### **11.5 Recruitment and Retention figures with protected characteristic breakdown:**

PW advised that the plan reported at the last meeting is that we would still be in excess of the target set but Government and that is still the case by the end of the financial year 2021/2022. So far this year we should have recruited 34 people, we have recruited 32 but are still on target to exceed that uplift. Out of the 32 that we have recruited 20% of those are visible black, Asian and ethnic minority officers and that compares to a total of 9.8% in 2021 which is a big increase so far. That compares to a National average of 7.1%, we are looking to get to 30% rather than the National average. Of those intakes 40% were female, the National average is 31%. The next intakes are in July and August, one of those is our Standard Student and Officer intake and the other is the accelerated detective constable programme. Based on the numbers we have at the moment we will recruit all 35 of those students and we think 25% of those will be visible black, Asian and ethnic minority officers. Within the Detective Constable programme out of the 20 recruits we think at least 6 of those will be visible black, Asian and ethnic minority Officers which is really positive. It is going in the right direction but is something we need to keep a focus on as it can slip.

Looking at leavers, in the first 3 months of the year we have seen 21 leavers. 9 of those are Officers with less than 2 years' service and those 9 are mixed into those in terms of being dismissed, those that have had performance issues within their probationary period which we have allowed to go on Regulation 13, and we lost 4 people due to the job not being what they expected it to be in terms of work/life balance. We need to do a bit of work on this as all 4 were over 30 years old and we are working to understand that a little bit more. We are looking at an attrition rate of around about 9% for the year and the previous year was just over 10%, we are currently at 6.2% with a National average of around 8%.



Hopefully in January I can come back to the meeting and highlight that we have maintained what I have just shown you over the past two months.

FA shared that those are quite promising and thank you for the work you have put into getting this information for us. What is the overall head count for all Officers that we have in post at the moment?

PW advised that by the end of this year we are looking to end up with a 1,460 head count. This is the highest number of Officers we have had in a very long time.

FA asked are the exit interviews happening for everyone? FA advised that if it gets to the point when people are wanting to leave without wanting an exit interview, at that point it has got quite bad.

PW explained that it is an area we are looking into. We are gathering more information as to why people are leaving through these interviews but unfortunately, we are not getting to everyone at the moment. I hope by the January meeting I will be able to give you more of a better picture of this.

CK agreed that these are great rates for the new intakes that are coming in but what does that make us overall across the force in terms black/minority Officers, percentage wise?

PW advised it is going to be a figure close to 10% but I need to check this and get back to you as I don't have the figure to hand.

CK said that in terms of recruitment we are getting people contact the OPCC to say that they have been passed the approve stages for nearly one year and there does still appear to be a backlog. I know the Force spent a lot of time trying to get rid of some of those hurdles that were in the way but where are we with trying to withdraw some of those hurdles that seem to have crept back in as people are giving up with the system and getting jobs elsewhere.

PW stated in terms of the April intake where we were expecting 15 but we got 11, a lot of that was down to the backlog around our OH service. The Chief has agreed recently some investment into that OH service because of the additional increase around uplift. We achieved the maximum that we were expecting in June and we have got 38 in the pool for ADCP for 20 vacancies and we are going to fill the July intake with 15. We are making sure that the pool is sufficient to deal with the intakes that we have got.

CK commented that is good but reputationally when people don't have a good experience and go elsewhere and they then tell others, that is not what we would be looking for. In terms of attrition, we had that data come for Police and Crime Panel that were asking for it and the Special Constabulary, they were three times more likely to quit than regulars at the moment. Are you aware of that figure and are you looking at it as something the Force are dealing with?

PW confirmed we see all of the information at Force Executive for staff officers and Specials so we are aware of the attrition. As you are aware from when we mentioned it at the last Strat Board there has been a review around Specials as we have the extra resource in there to keep an eye in terms of the development around that. To confirm, yes, we are aware of this and it is something that we are keeping an eye on.

CK it will be interesting to see that attrition rate go in the right direction for Specials in the future then.





GF commented that there are a number of factors in there, firstly, a number of our Specials are taking the opportunity of uplift to join the Organisation which is good as we want to see that. We also know that not all of our Specials are fans of the review we have taken and some of them are choosing, sadly some who have made a fantastic contribution and given many hours to policing, are choosing that they don't want to operate under than new mode. Therefore, we will be losing some people from there and that is regrettable but we have a healthy pipeline of other people coming in and we think ultimately that the benefits we will get from having a task, focused and well aligned constabulary will outweigh the overall loss of those individuals albeit we are sad to see them go. The attrition piece as well overall is quite an interested piece, Bedfordshire has the highest proportion of Officers with less than 5 years' service of in any Force in the Country. Given that most people leave policing within their first three years, we would expect to have the highest attrition rate of any Force in the Country if you follow that through. As it is multi-factual and there are other things that focus in there as well, it isn't quite as straightforward as that. We do recognise that we have some additional work to do to focus on our retention piece.

CK also mentioned about the Website in terms of recruitment, when you go on it there is the option to say whether you got all the information that you needed. I noticed that it was quite high and people are saying that it didn't have what they needed. Have we got someone looking at that to improve the information on it?

PW confirmed that it is constantly reviewed but if there is something that is not working quite well we will get Comms to have a look at it. It has been overhauled recently and the level of positivity we are getting around the website and the number of hits has grown considerably but we will have a look at that and make sure that it is working effectively.

CK agreed that the hits look good but it is the option where you can say whether you got the information, it will show you how many people liked it or didn't like it. It also asks you what didn't you like and I was wondering who is looking at that information as I hope it is not just sat somewhere

GF commented regarding the length of time as this is a concern. If there are people watching this meeting, I would urge them to stick with it and be patient, sadly it can take an awfully long time to get through the process. Other Forces are in similar positions as well regarding the length of time it is taking but my advice would be to please remain patient, it is the best job in the World and I think Bedfordshire is the best Force in the Country to come and join.

**ITEM 12. VOICE OF THE PUBLIC**

**Questions/topics raised by members of the public/partners or Police and Crime Panel:**

**12.1 Interpreter Services:**

FA advised that this came up as a result of one of my visits to different Police Stations, Big Word interpreting service. The feedback from some Officers about this service wasn't great. Are the Force aware of any issues or has anything been brought to your attention about this?

SB updated that we use a provider called Big Word for all interpreter services and we have been using them for over 2 years now. We use them in collaboration with our Local and Regional partners. There is a simple and effective feedback process for anyone who uses Big Word. That is managed locally at Chief Inspector level and then across the 3 Forces as Superintendent level, that then falls into our Regional Custody Forum which is chaired at DCC level. They are not reporting any wider issues. There maybe a couple of things here, one is that maybe there aren't any issues or two, people aren't submitting the feedback. I also spend a lot of time walking about, just this week because I knew it was on the agenda, I spoke with three teams – Custody, Enquiry Office and Response who all use that service. Not one of them said that they are experiencing any issues. If there are specific issues or concerns they need to be fed back, as we need to get better value for money for a service that we are paying for. If people are not aware that there is a mechanism in place we will showcase what that looks like so that people do use it.



FA said that he will touch base with the Sergeants and see if they will be happy to email SB with their concerns.

### 12.2 Specials Review Update:

GF updated that the ownership of both the recruitment and training for our new Special Constable colleagues has now migrated from Citizens in Policing in Force to the Collaborated Learning and Development function. L&D now hold responsibility for all of those training courses for the Special Policing Constabulary for all new entrants. Once they are then accredited through their training they will move across to be offered training that their regular counterparts get and they will get that on their respective teams and departments. We have got quite a healthy waiting list around Special Constabulary. In terms of the current numbers of people waiting we have got 11 awaiting shortlisting, 27 awaiting pre-employment checks and 21 awaiting initial course. The black and Asian ethnic minority breakdown is 14.58%, I don't unfortunately have the breakdown of male/female. We have an Attraction and Engagement Officer who is part of L&D who has been given thematic ownership of both Special Constables and PCSO's, which means that we can start to target the recruitment activity as we come out of lockdown. Now that we have the Special Constables integrating into regular teams, they will be going to all training sessions that are held, if they are available to do that. That has seen Special Constables receives COTTS tasking system training and Speed Gun training. We have then got bespoke Special Constable training which is delivered by Susie Carr, Special Constable Co-Ordinator. She has recently delivered Victim and Witness Statement Taking Training which will continue. We have got National Leadership Training to our Special Inspectors and Sergeants and also Professional Standards input into all of our professional Sergeants and Inspectors for Specials. We are going to have some wider mandatory professional standards inputs covering all of the Special Constabulary but that will continue throughout the course of the year. We are aligning it to the normal training and having bespoke training where that is required. In addition to that as part of the review, we have got specialist special constabulary pathways. We are going to be attaching people to response teams for 12 months now rather than six months so they can do their policing activities to get to an independent patrol status and it is about ensuring that the vast majority of our special constables are all independent patrol status and that they feel comfortable and competent in discharging their duties. Once they have got that they can either stay on response or can be aligned to a community policing team as SB mentioned, 60% are aligned to community policing teams or there are other opportunities for those who want to be career special and have a special set of skills for example, to pursue particular interests. We have got one special constable who has recently been deployed into the PPU because of their personal background that they have got in social care and they are contributing significantly already. We have other Special Constables who are trained in public order and we are looking to develop career pathways for almost any specialism within the Organisation including things like roads policing, cyber crime and any number of things that we can do to harness those skills and use them productively.

CK shared I am glad to hear that we have got a pool that we can rely on for over summer as those posts you mentioned (Recruitment and Retention) don't start until September so you have got a bit of a lag to get that going again.

FA confirmed the numbers of those who are waiting to join the Specials?

GF advised that it is around 60 people. GF also advised that he started his career as a Special Constable and shared that it is a great thing to do and said that it is his ambition to have more Special Constables in the establishment than we currently do. Our pressure has been around having to deliver on the uplift numbers at the same time as trying to grow the Special Constabulary, we only have so much capacity to deliver that through HR, vetting and L&D but definitely we are very keen to grow this and make it stronger than it already is.

FA asked in terms of the welfare and support that is available for Specials and volunteers, would the ones that are available for regular officers be available to Specials as well?



CC confirmed they absolutely would
<b><u>ITEM 13 VERU</u></b>
<b>13.1 VERU monthly Performance:</b>
<p>SB said that he would not go through the whole paper but will highlight some key headlines.</p> <p>It is a fabulous network that we have in our VERU and it is led by Kimberly Campbell-Lamb. It goes from strength to strength and in may we had 10 referrals into the VERU and that led it up to 77 open referrals. In June alone, we had 21 referrals following the tragic event in Luton. That was a mix of both males and females, a mix of across the whole of the County, the most prominent age is those we really want to work with in terms of intervention and diversion, the most prominent group being those in the 14 to 17 year old' bracket. What we will get back at the end of the month is both a local and national evaluation. At the most recent VERU Board we got an oversight which was very complimentary about the work that the VERU are doing.</p> <p>Over the last month, there was some great exposures done by Look East which the Commissioner was also involved in terms of some of the initiatives. July is equally busy in terms of communication, engagement and actual intervention and diversion.</p> <p>Kick off at 3 is a sporting campaign and we have got 3 days of community engagement across Luton.</p> <p>SB updated to raise awareness about Bavex (Bedfordshire Against Violence and Exploitation). This is an amazing campaign which seeks to support families, friends and those affected individually. I have seen the parenting webinar that is going to go out which is excellent. I would like to use this opportunity just to raise awareness and get people to look at that Website and sign up to some of that material, it will really help Signpost to support individuals who are close to individuals that may be subject to exploitation.</p> <p>FA on behalf of all of us I want to thank VERU for the fantastic job they are doing, I have to take my hat off to them and thank the team and also partners who support this effort.</p> <p>CK updated that the 166 over the two years is great that we have had this amount of support to those individuals. I think where we want to start going to is really speaking to Government about the funding for VERU as we know that the year to year funding is not ideal and if we can start showing some of the outcome to them that might help. If we can talk about how many people come into VERU and then how many come out in a really healthy way that would be great as it is something that I haven't seen in any of the documents yet.</p> <p>FA agreed about funding and advised he was in a meeting this morning with other PCC's who also receive the VERU funding and said that this is an issue. If you are going to be commissioning work with partners, it takes them sometime to get the resources in and they want to know that they have longer term planning in place to keep staff on the job but with the current year on year funding, it is not a good way to go. We will be working with the Government and we will be pushing for this.</p>
<b><u>ITEM 14 NEXT AGENDA</u></b>
Items for Next Meeting:
CK advised that the Force are moving to a File Quality Team and said that it would be nice to understand why did we go this way instead of case builders.



It would be good to go into the Force risk register a bit more for example Number 5, the consideration of removing the 'Blue Notebooks' and moving to 'To Serve'.

FA agreed that he would like to keep regular items on the agenda as it is good for everyone, including the public to know what is going on and that we are on top of things.

FA thanked all for attending the meeting and for those who have been watching.



**Questions from Live Stream Strat Board – 24/5/21**

Number:	Question:	Person Who Raised Question:	Area/Responsibility:	Answer:	Date Updated/ Completed:
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2.					
3.					
4.					
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