



POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR BEDFORDSHIRE
Delivery and Beating Crime Board
Thursday 20 October 2022

MINUTES – PART 2

Attending:	Festus Akinbusoye, Police Crime Commissioner - OPCC (FA)
	Trevor Rodenhurst, Acting Chief Constable - Force (TR)
	Sharn Basra, Assistant Chief Constable – Force (SB)
	Dan Vajzovic – Acting Deputy Chief Constable (DV)
	Phil Wells, Chief Finance Officer – Force (PW)
	Anna Villette, Interim Chief Executive – OPCC (AC)
	Wayne Humberstone, Director of Delivery – OPCC (WH)
	Katie Beaumont, Transparency Manager - OPCC (KB)
	Rachel Glendenning, Staff Officer - Force (RG)
	Gemma McCormack, Executive Assistant – OPCC (GM)
	Pauline Stewart, Executive Assistant – OPCC (PS)

FA welcomed everyone to the public section of the Delivery Board meeting where the PCC asks questions to the Force from members of the public and also asks the Force to provide updates in line with the Police and Crime Plan.

ITEM 9 – UPDATES:

9.1 Force Activity against the Police and Crime Plan:

TR advised that he will be reporting today in relation to Priority 4 – ‘Placing residents and victims at the centre of policing priorities’.

FA asked what would be considered a satisfactory number in relation to the Victim Satisfaction Surveys, to try to get to as the number at the moment is relatively low compared to the number of interactions that the Officers have. TR is advised that it is being explored for this to be changed to an automated survey through the change programme that is currently ongoing.

FA asked in terms of support for Officers and staff, what is the uptake of the support that is being offered and, in terms of the assaults that Officers and staff are facing, are there any continuing trends that is worth flagging up?

TR advised that we continue to see a high number of assaults of Officers and staff which is concerning and the Force continues to be very robust with this and would like body worn footage to be shown not just in trials but in guilty pleas as well as a person may appear very different in Court as they did when the assault was carried out. The numbers of assaults continue to persist



and we have a 9 point plan that we put in as response to any individual who has been assaulted. We have hopefully removed any stigma that is associated with this and we have people coming forward who have been victims of crime, domestic abuse etc and we have internal support in place to support those individuals.

FA asked if TR is satisfied with the level of personal safety training that Officers have completed? TR advised that Officers are offered support to ensure that they are more confident in their personal defence tactics and de-escalation tactics, different people have different needs and if they feel they need more training then this is provided to them. There is mandatory training for fitness and personal training that is provided on a regular basis.

SB advised in terms of wellbeing, each assault is tiered to the level of impact on that individual, this covers not only physical abuse but also verbal abuse as well. The support mechanism is there to encourage officers to continue to report and ensure they are supported throughout. We will not tolerate any assault on emergency services workers.

FA asked regarding the community functions and what the teams are doing, some queries have been raised regarding the priority setting meetings in that they are still not being communicated enough. Some teams are better than others in informing councillors and residents on when these meetings are taking place. FA asked for this to be looking into to get a more uniformed approach across the community teams. TR advised that he will take this away to ensure the teams are communicating these meetings. FA advised that he has been on the police.uk website and commends the Force for including the names of the officers who are allocated to each community hub, this is great and has consistently been improving. Not all Hubs have an updated priority outcomes for their areas, some have none at all, it would be good if this was updated to keep residents and councillors informed.

FA asked when the MASH (multi agency safeguarding hub) became fully resourced? TR advised the backlogs had been cleared and has been fully resourced for the past coming of months. This is a high demand area which we may need to be re looked at and will continue to monitor this area.

VCOP is an area of concern and FA is pleased that there are systems are in place to address this. FA asked SB to update regarding the dashboard? SB advised the Force dataset had been evolved in relation to VCOP, initially this was presented as VCOP as a whole. We needed to understand the 12 Pillars so now the dashboards looks into the 12 areas and extracts that information for where we are strong, where gaps are etc to identify any issues. SB advised there is a system where the vast majority can be automated, this brings out data but not free text, we need to identify key words to extract and also look into the detail to see why people are not satisfied. TR advised we are approaching 400 students becoming officers and therefore it is important to not just respond to an incident but also to respond to a victim and keep them



updated. This is a culture that we will continue to drive forward across the Force, especially now that we have a younger workforce which is continuing to grow.

ITEM 10 – COMMUNITY POLICING:

10.1 Community Policing Report - Recent changes/action taken

RG updated in regards to the numbers in community policing, the report being referred to is from last month which shows there was 59 Officers within community policing, this month it has dropped to 57 and 6 of those vacancies sit within Luton, there have been people recruited into those vacancies but we need to continue to maintain the new patrol position at the moment, we will revisit in January 2023 to start moving Officers over. Whilst the vacancies are held within Luton, Superintendent Whittred has good oversight of that in terms of operational activity then can move the resources around accordingly to ensure that the communities are getting what they need.

FA asked in terms of people moving in and out, do we know the main reasons of why that happens and are we tracking the average time officers spend in community before they move on? RG advised that most officers are in there for a number of years but some want to learn a different area of the organisation to develop themselves or specialize in roads policing or firearms. We don't track the return on investment but the majority do stay there for a long time. FA asked if there is a minimum requirement for those who come into the community to stay in that team for a certain period of time? RG advised there isn't a formal tenure but there is a conversation on what is best for the community, Officer etc before people move on from the team. FA feels it would be worth considering having a tenure in place where Officers are required to stay in the team for a certain period of time before they move on as this has an impact on communities. TR advised that he is opposed to the tenure as it is not a risk area for the Force, there are some very talented people who want to go into community and we might get a lot of them over 2 years but, as they might be looking to get promoted or develop themselves they may be put off by going in via tenure. TR feels this may have an adverse effect on people by either not wanting to go into that area or even leaving the Force. If we can get that environment right people would enjoy it and want to stay and we will keep this under review.

SB advised we need to be better with comms, we do listen to and engage with our communities but may fall short in terms of reporting back. SB shared that some communities want face to face meetings, some want updates on social media etc. A survey has been sent to communities to ask them to complete a survey on how they would like the Force to engage with them going forward. The response will then be collated and a plan put in place. FA advised that some areas have meetings well in advance so that communities are aware whereas other areas do not have any information. TR advised he will report this back to the community teams.

ITEM 11 – VOICE OF THE PUBLIC:



11.1 Issues raised to the PCC

FA advised that this is the section of the meeting where FA will ask some questions of his own to the Force and also questions that have been received from members of the public.

In light of the Casey Review, can TR give the PCC reassurance that complaints/misconduct issues are being dealt with fairly and robustly. TR advised that he is glad this question has been raised as TR had wanted the opportunity to say something on this. This is a really concerning report to read and TR's assessment of where we are – we saw concerning things of that nature in 2019, but not to the extent that is in the report, this caused us to make the culture of the organisation a number one priority. Some of the things we saw were disproportionate referrals of black, Asian and ethnic minority officers to professional standards, confidence in reporting and knowing that would be dealt with and that the outcome would be right, and a number of other things. In terms of that, over that last 3 years, and there has not been a quarter that has gone by where there has not been tangible activity in relation to the culture of the organisation. We have focussed on the culture of the organisation and had difficult conversations, particularly we focussed on first and second line managers to begin with and they were sessions led by the whole of the force executive which included a section from TR on live life experience of some individuals within the organisation which included people being either asked to evidence their competence more or possibly being referred to Professional Standards as someone avoided a difficult conversation. TR reported that the Force has gone from a position where there was some disproportionality in the system with referrals to PSD to one where there is now not. We now do not have disproportionate referrals into PSD or in the outcomes. In addition to the whole of the workforce, there has also been a real focus on the PSD side of things and one of the things there is a highly effective independent scrutiny of their decision making by a panel of individuals who are experts in cultural awareness because of live life experience and other backgrounds, they were able to give opinions of cases before final decisions are made. We also have what has been recognised as put in place a most independent scrutiny of our coercive powers to stop and search which extends to use of force, road traffic checks, all of where we look for disproportionate outcomes internal or external, Bedfordshire is in a good place and link directly into the Race Action Plan. We have done a lot with the workforce to encourage reporting any behaviours that are not in line with the values of the organisation. That reporting has gone up due to a better confidence in reporting and a zero tolerance in behaviours. TR reassured that this has been a consistent focus for three years and we have seen a dial shift in the data we have looked for and understood to change and because of that work Bedfordshire is in a better position than has been described in the report.

FA thanked the Force Executive team for all the hard work and said it is pleasing to hear this is being taken seriously and things are being done proactively.



FA asked for an updated regarding the Emergency Duty Team and appropriate adults as this has been a concern due to Officers spending a lot of time doing things that are not part of their role?

TR advised that we have not been seeing an issues with getting appropriate adults, this has been progressed and there are no concerns at the moment. TR advised regarding EDT, one of the things asked of them is that they answer the phone when there is an out of hours incident particularly if we have a child that needs accommodation who should not be in the care of the Police and needs support, this is where the pressure is within the system. We continue to see long delays in transferring the care from the Police into the Local Authority. We have agreed the issues and the need to work together to resolve this and we also still find officers spending a lot of time in A&E before they are able to attend someone who is not under arrest go into medical care, also with missing persons – a child leaving a setting they have been in but have not returned. These continues to be areas of focus and we need to find a way of working with agencies to resolve this. FA advised that this will remain on the Agenda for regular updates.

FA asked regarding an update on the findings from the Force Control Room with the AWS, especially in terms of call volumes, where are the calls coming from and how many are Police related calls? TR updated the volume of calls and online conversations that go into the control room have continued to increase. The average one year ago was roughly 1,000 calls less than what it is now. This has been looked at in great detail and the pressure for the Force here and now is that we are below the strength we should be in the control room to provide the service we want to for the public and despite incredible work from the people in there who are working under pressure, we are not delivering the service in terms if timeliness and being able to answer everything in the way we want to, for non emergency. We are confident that the resources in there will have improved by the end of the financial year. We are also seeing the demand continuing to rise and also demand that is not for the Police coming into that room for example, 30% of the webchats are being diverted to other agencies as it is not for the Police to answer. We have an automated way where this can be filtered out and the aim is for this also to be used for non emergency voice calls.

FA asked regarding reporting using the online system, feedback received says that the webform is very complicated and hard to complete. Those who are reporting are unaware if the Force are received these reports?

TR advised the Force have now gone to Single Online Home for some reporting and very recently, the way that you can report some things into the Force has changed which has improved that system but also, the webchat, where the issues cannot be resolved by the automated answer, you should be able to get through and speak to someone. SB advised that there are different ways of contacting the Force for example going through websites, apps etc and you can report for crime, missing people, traffic, you are able to tell us certain things and in addition to that you have the chat. The chat is something we want to bring in gradually to ensure



that we have it right. We have had positive feedback on reporting crime online, if this is done online you will receive an automated receipt and crime number.

FA asked regarding the incident on the A1 and asked for Force powers to be clarified, how they were used in relation to the Police response that took place during this vigil. Some concerns had been raised that violations of road traffic rules had taken place, will any actions be taken if there is any video evidence to prove that?

TR recognises that an individual lost his life which is why there was a vigil and expressed his sympathies to the individual and his family. The vigil took place on the A1 on a Friday evening and there wasn't full compliance with the Police who only had 24 hours notice that this was going to take place. The Force did work with that the best they could and prepared to enforce and we serve notices on that and effectively gave them 15 minutes for that but it is right that this was a difficult policing matter, it did go off with minimal impact due to the work between the Force, Highways and others to put it in place. There was enforcement at the time, two cars were seized and some notices were issued, we have some footage which is currently being scrutinised for any offences that may have taken place.

ITEM 12 – AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING:

Force inclusion and equality.

Update on special constabulary and retirement

Wellbeing and welfare update.

Next Meeting: 22nd November 2022