



**STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD**

**Notes of meeting held on Tuesday, 04 March 2014  
in the Main Committee Room, Lloyd House**

Present: Jones, Bob – Police and Crime Commissioner  
Connor, Brendan – Non-executive  
Hannon, Cath – Non-executive  
Hendricks, Cllr Ernie – Non-executive  
Mosquito, Cllr Yvonne – Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner  
Nazir, Cllr Mohammad – Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner  
Sawdon, Cllr Tim – Non-executive

In attendance: Hickman, Fiona – Committee Manager  
Meffen, Richard – T/Assistant Director of Resources  
Nicholson, Andy – Assistant Chief Constable  
Williams, Mike – Chief Finance Officer

Observers: 2

|               |  |               |
|---------------|--|---------------|
| <b>030/14</b> | <b>Conflicts of Interest</b>   | <b>030/14</b> |
|               | None.  |               |
| <b>031/14</b> | <b>Apologies</b>   | <b>031/14</b> |
|               | Apologies had been received from Cllr Faye Abbott, Cllr Judy Foster, the Chief Executive and the T/Deputy Chief Constable. |               |
| <b>032/14</b> | <b>Notes of the Last Meeting</b>   | <b>032/14</b> |
|               | The Board approved the notes of the meetings held in public and in private on 04 February 2014.                            |               |
| <b>033/14</b> | <b>Public Questions</b>  | <b>033/14</b> |
|               | No questions from the public had been received.  |               |

**034/14 Finance: Revenue Monitoring and Financial Health Indicators**

**034/14**

The Chief Finance Officer introduced the report which provided the forecast financial outturn based on the position at the end of January 2014 and the financial health indicators.

The Board considered the report and noted that:

- It would be necessary to increase the budget for the two new custody blocks from £30.6m to £34.6m as set out in paragraph 4 of the report. There was a draft decision report that the Board would consider in the private meeting on this matter and also the award of the contract for the Western site.
- Financial health indicator 15 (creditors) had been marginally below target over the past few months. The Chief Finance Officer assured the Board that this had not resulted in strained relationships with suppliers or in any compensation payments. A number of initiatives had been put in place to improve performance in this area. Whilst it was important to monitor invoices robustly, it was also important to pay suppliers on time.

**035/14 Performance against the 2013-14 Milestones and Deliverables in the Police and Crime Plan**

**035/14**

Chief Supt Manku introduced the report which outlined performance against the milestones and deliverables set out in the 2013/14 Police and Crime Plan.

During the discussion, the Board noted that:

- The Home Office had introduced a 'soft' launch of a new Outcomes Framework. It was noted that WMP would be in a position to report on this from April 2014 whereas a number of other forces would not be in that position until 2015. This would mean that comparative data with other forces would be difficult to obtain.
- **ACTION The Force would provide a report at the end of the year showing comparative data on activity per crime rather than overall crime.**  
*The report has been added to the work plan for May 2015.*
- Comparing crime data with most similar forces at a local policing unit level would be interesting. The Force was currently looking into the potential to provide such information.
- **ACTION The Force would endeavour to provide the following additional data at a future meeting:**
  - **information about vehicle crime showing changes in patterns of crime, high demand areas and such like;**

- **a breakdown of crime type in the Force's priority areas, particularly those key crime types that had an impact on performance such as retail crime, alcohol influenced violence, etc.**

*A request has been made for the data to be provided in the April performance report.*

## **036/14 Review of Public Protection Unit Update**

**036/14**

The Board agreed to take this item before the ACC Crime Portfolio Update.

ACC Nicholson introduced the report which provided an overview of the review of the Public Protection Unit under the Service Transformation Programme. He referred in detail to the organogram that had been circulated showing the organisational structure of the unit.

The Board considered the report and the discussion focused on the following areas.

### ***Management of the teams***

- The Board noted that the eight locally-based teams were managed centrally. Intelligence systems covered the whole of the area of business. Each team was headed by a detective chief inspector and above them there was a chief superintendent.
- Following the reorganisation there had been an increase in the number of officers working in this area. This was a reflection of the Force's changing focus. The Chief Constable's task was to focus Force resources on areas of threat and risk and to protect the public as best as possible. The protection of people who were at risk was now the focus rather than the protection of property that was at risk. The Force was able to change its focus because it was becoming more adept at the way it managed property crime.

### ***Domestic Violence Protection Orders***

- The Board noted that Domestic Violence Protection Orders would be available in June and enquired how these might be used by the Force, particularly in domestic violence cases where there were children in the household.
- The Chief Constable referred to an internal exercise where the Force was considering the relationship between domestic abuse and children. The Force was still working through how the new powers would be used. It was clear though that if a child was at the centre of a case, the DMPOs would not be used as a substitute for the child protection powers that the Force already had.

### ***Partnership working***

- Paragraph 32 of the report indicated that local authorities had not taken up the offer for the secondment of a partner operational service manager into the Service Transformation Team. This was owing to an accident of timing rather than the local authorities

declining to participate. Partnership working was very important and the introduction of the Sandwell MASH and Stephen Rimmer's work on the Preventing Violent against Vulnerable People was very welcome.

The Chief Constable acknowledged the contribution that Cath Hannon had made to the review of the Public Protection Unit project. She encouraged other members of the Board to visit the PPU teams.

**037/14 ACC Crime Portfolio**

**037/14**

ACC Nicholson introduced the report which provided an overview of his operations portfolio which also included criminal justice.

The Board considered the report and noted that:

- In relation to the partnership launch event for the drugs strategy, an externally-focused event arranged by the Commissioner would be most welcome. The Commissioner suggested that it might also include problems associated alcohol-related crime.
- The Force's activities in tackling street gangs were commended, as was PC Gill Squire's work on the recent Female Genital Mutilation seminar, and the creation of the Emerging Trends Team.

**038/14 Police Constable Recruitment Update**

**038/14**

The T/Assistant Director of Resources and the Head of Human Resources introduced the report which provided an update on the current recruitment process for police constables.

The Board considered the report and noted that:

- A recent newspaper article had criticised the cost of using an external recruitment agency to support the recruitment exercise. Given that this was a one-off exercise to recruit a significant number of officers and that the Force had made savings by reducing its infrastructure, the Chief Constable considered it to be good value for money and the right way to proceed.
- The Force was working with the College of Policing and representatives from other interested forces to ensure that it was taking advantage of positive action opportunities and best practice in the recruitment exercise.
- The educational requirements for entry into Force had been raised which reflected current employment trends.
- The force would welcome participation by Board members in its engagement with the public on the recruitment exercise. Dates of forthcoming events had been circulated.

- A breakdown of expressions of interest by post code and ethnicity could be provided to the Board. At the moment, the figures indicated that more work could be done in the Chinese and Eastern European communities to market the exercise.

#### 039/14 Use of the Community Safety Fund

039/14

The Chief Finance Officer introduced the report which provided an update on the spending activity for the Community Safety Fund monies allocated to each of the seven Community Safety Partnerships by the Commissioner.

The Board considered the report and noted that:

- The spend for quarter 3 for Dudley that was shown in the report was incorrect. It should have shown £327,384.
- This was the first time a report had been submitted to the Board on the use of the Community Safety Fund.
- When allocating the funds, the Commissioner had taken a light touch to the auditing and reporting process. The strategy had been to give the maximum amount of flexibility to the CSPs to meet local needs. However, he still had a duty to give an account of how the money had been spent. The information attached to the report was not sufficient to do that. Information about the outcomes of activities and the value of the activities would be welcome in future. **ACTION The Chief Finance Officer would develop a standardised template for reporting back.**  
*Work is in progress on the template.*
- A more robust approach to underspend should be taken in future.

#### 040/14 Decisions

040/14

Two draft decisions were considered:

##### a) UKBA Custody Visiting Provision

The Board supported the process for providing custody services to UKBA at Birmingham Airport custody site. **ACTION The Commissioner would make a formal decision to sign the agreement between himself and the UKBA** *The Commissioner made the decision on 5 March 2014. Decision WMPCC 003 2014 UKBA Custody Visiting Provision can be found on the Commissioner's website [www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk](http://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk)*

##### b) Variations to the Police and Crime Plan

The Board supported the proposed variations to the Police and Crime Plan. **ACTION The Commissioner would make a formal decision to agree the Plan with the agreed variations** *The Commissioner made the decision on 5 March 2014. Decision*

WMPCC 004 Police and Crime Plan with Variations agreed on 5 March 2014 can be found on the Commissioner's website [www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk](http://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk)

**041/14 Referrals from Local Policing and Crime Boards, Police and Crime Panel and partner bodies 034114**

There were no referrals from Local Policing and Crime Boards, the Police and Crime Panel or partner bodies. No thematic issues had yet been raised by any members of the Board.

**042/14 Chief Constable Update 042/14**

The Chief Constable raised three matters:

***Force approach to domestic abuse cases***

- There was an ongoing investigation by the Professional Standards Department into a series of allegations against two police officers about a message purportedly left on the answerphone of a victim of domestic abuse.
- While the Chief Constable could not discuss the details of an ongoing investigation, he wished to assure the Board and the public that this did not represent the way in which the Force dealt with cases of domestic abuse. Indeed, there had been a profound reaction by officers in the Force to the allegations.

***Apology to Andrew Mitchell MP***

- The Chief Constable had visited Andrew Mitchell MP on 21 February 2014 to offer an apology for the Force's part in the events commonly known as 'Plebgate'. The meeting had been arranged at the time that the Chief Constable had given evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee on the subject.
- The apology was not related to anything that had happened at Downing Street. It only related to the three Police Federation representatives who had visited Mr Mitchell following the Downing Street events and their campaign against him.
- Mr Mitchell had accepted the apology.
- There was still a great deal of complexity around the current IPCC investigation.

***HMIC Inspections***

- HMIC had had a significant increase in their funding which had enabled them to programme in a series of inspections.
- The inspections were placing a significant administrative burden on the Force. A recent inspection on attendance and efforts to free up police time, for example, had involved 91 hours of senior police officer time. The Force was in discussion with HMIC about this burden.

- The programme of inspections was a national process driven by the HMIC's assessment of risk. The Home Secretary could also add to the programme of inspections. Although the HMIC had not yet reported back on the recent inspection referred to above, there did not appear to be any benefits to the Force arising from the inspection.

|        | <b>Outstanding Actions from Previous Meetings</b>  |        |
|--------|--|--------|
| 016/13 | Professional Standards Department, Quality of Service  | 016/13 |
|        | West Midlands Police Working Group on disproportionality.<br>The Board welcome the work being done on disproportionality.<br><b>ACTION The Force would circulate the action plan to members of the Board.</b>  |        |
| 040/13 | Performance against the 2013-14 milestones and deliverables in the Police and Crime Plan   | 040/13 |
|        | <b>ACTION The Deputy Commissioner would discuss with the Force how she might promote the good work of the Counter Terrorism Unit in ensuring public safety.</b>  |        |
| 045/13 | Collaboration Update   | 045/13 |
|        | There were no further details yet about the £50m innovation funding mentioned in the Comprehensive Spending Review statement.<br><b>ACTION The Board would be updated on the innovation funding once the details had been received.</b>  |        |
| 046/13 | Outcomes from the Victims' Consultation  | 046/13 |
|        | The Board considered the report and supported option 1 which was to set up a West Midlands-wide structure, led by Victims Support, working with other voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations. <b>ACTION The Commissioner and Cath Hannon would explore this option further taking into account the concerns raised by some of VCSE organisations.</b> |        |
| 064/13 | ACC Operations Portfolio Update  | 064/13 |
|        | ○ <b>ACTION. The Force and the Commissioner would explore whether it would be possible for a representative from the West Midlands Police to attend the regional NPAS board meetings as an observer.</b>   |        |
| 107/13 | Professional Standards   | 107/13 |
|        | The Board considered the report and the discussion focused on what could be done to improve public and police officer confidence in the police complaints system. Greater transparency was perhaps just one  |        |

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|--------|---|--------|
|        | step; something more radical such as a redrawing of the whole complaints systems might be needed. <b>ACTION. Brendan Connor and ACC Cann would discuss outside the meeting what might be done within the Force.</b>   |        |
| 108/13 | West Midlands Office for Policing and Crime Casework  | 108/13 |
|        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>it would be useful to seek the public's view of the service they received. <b>ACTION. The Chief Executive would consider how this could best be achieved.</b></li> </ul>   |        |
| 014/14 | Stop and Search Action Plan – Outcome of Consultation   | 014/14 |
|        | The Board supported the conclusions of the report. <b>ACTION The action plan would be updated with the direction of travel on technology and the plan would be reviewed when the outcome of the Home Office consultation on Stop and Search became available.</b> |        |