



west midlands
police and crime
commissioner

STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD

**Notes of meeting held on Tuesday, 3 February 2015
in Committee Room 6, Council House, Victoria Square, Birmingham**

- Present: Jamieson, David – Police and Crime Commissioner
Abbott, Cllr Faye – Board Member
Connor, Brendan – Board Member
Foster, Cllr Judy – Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner
Hannon, Cath – Board Member
Hendricks, Ernie – Board Member
Mosquito, Cllr Yvonne – Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner
Sawdon, Cllr Tim – Board Member
- In attendance: Cann, Gary – Assistant Chief Constable
Hickman, Fiona – Governance Manager
Sims, Chris – Chief Constable
Thompson, David – Deputy Chief Constable
Waithe, Darlene – Legal Adviser
Wilkin, David – Director of Resources
Williams, Mike – Chief Finance Officer
- Observers: 11

010/15 Opening Remarks

010/15

The Commissioner:

- welcomed members of the public to the meeting
- welcomed Darlene Waithe, the OPCC Legal Adviser, to her first Board meeting.
- indicated that he was expecting a BBC cameraman at about 11 o'clock to film a short scene of the meeting to use as a backdrop for an interview he would be doing with the BBC outside the meeting in relation to the report on the Strategic Policing Requirement.
[Subsequently the cameraman did not arrive but the interview went ahead.]

011/15 Conflicts of Interest **011/15**

None.

012/15 Apologies **012/15**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Mohammad Nazir who was attending an Asset Strategy Group meeting in Walsall where there was a report on the Walsall police station building. Apologies had also been received from the Chief Executive.

013/15 Notes of the Last Meeting **013/15**

The Board approved the notes of the meeting held in public on 6 January 2015.

014/15 Public Questions **014/15**

The Commissioner informed the Board that Mr David Page had submitted four questions. The Commissioner had accepted one of them and had explained to Mr Page that the intention was that members of the public could ask only one question per meeting. Mr Page would receive a written response to his other three questions which would be dealt with as though they were Freedom of Information requests.

Mr David Page read out his question which was as follows.

On the 11th September 2014 at a board meeting during the discussions over WMP estate @ Coventry and Walsall, the PCC stated WMP/PCC should be 'open and clear with people'. On the 2nd December 2014 at a board meeting during the discussion over the closure of front offices or reducing their opening hours, the PCC referred to the WMP survey found that Castle Vale had one visit every two hours.

When WMP announced the planned programme of closure / reduction the only public document did not have the survey figures for each station. Document: <http://www.west-midlands.police.uk/docs/contact-us/front-office-changes/contacting-the-police-FINAL1.pdf>

Will the PCC release now the survey figures for each station? (Including those where WMP have announced a decision on their future, on the 16th January 2015).

In response, the Commissioner thanked Mr Page for his question and confirmed that the survey figures for each station had been made available on the West Midlands Police website on 18 November 2014. They were contained in the BMG Evaluation of Front Offices document which included information about all of the front offices. The Commissioner's office would be happy to help him to locate the document.

015/15 Questions from the Board on matters not on the agenda

015/15

One question had been submitted to the Chief Constable and a copy was circulated. The question was as follows.

Given the recent reported experience of Essex Police (*The Daily Telegraph* 23 December 2014) in seizing licensed firearms from holders suspected of being involved in domestic violence, could the Chief Constable:

- a) give an assurance that West Midlands Police relate data on firearms certificate holders to incidents reported to the police?
- b) indicate how many holders of firearm certificates there are in the West Midlands?
- c) indicate what number of confiscations of firearms have taken place in the last two years within the West Midlands?

(Asked by Brendan Connor)

In response, the Chief Constable advised that:

- a) This had been an issue in other parts of the country as well as Essex. The West Midlands Police took a number of approaches to the matter. Holders of firearms licences were flagged up on the Police National Computer and on the command and control system. Cross-referencing against the national firearms database was carried out in response to 999 and 101 calls and geographical as well as nominal checks were carried out. West Midlands Police and Staffordshire Police operated a joint unit which dealt with firearms licensing.
- b) There were 10,573 firearms licences issued to individuals in the West Midlands who between them held 26,504 firearms. In other words, some licences were for multiple firearms.
- c) Firearms were not confiscated but licences were revoked. 20 licences had been revoked in 2014/15.

The Board noted that the Law Commission were reviewing the current firearms legislation and that the Deputy Chief Constable would be making a submission to the review.

016/15 Update on the Budget 2015/16

016/15

The Commissioner and the Chief Finance Officer provided an oral update on the Police and Crime Panel's discussion of the proposed budget and precept at its meeting on 2 February.

The Board noted that:

- The key issue for the Panel continued to be the Commissioner's proposal to increase the precept while at the same time holding

significant reserves. However, it should be noted there were plans in place to use significant proportions of these reserves. At the end of the 3-year period the reserves would be reduced to £25m.

- The justification for the increase in the precept was that:
 - It would reduce the amount of savings that needed to be made in any event
 - Steps needed to be taken about the grant to precept ratio
 - It was not just about one year's worth of precept increase. It would be built into the tax bases.
- The Commissioner had made the point at the Panel meeting that because the Government did not give certainty about the grant year on year, it was necessary to have some protection and the precept provided that. It was only around £1.5m a year.
- At the end of its discussion, the Panel had voted in favour of supporting the budget proposals. It had seven days to respond formally to the Commissioner. **ACTION the Commissioner would then make a formal decision on the budget and precept and the seven Local Authorities would be informed of the precept for their areas.**

The Commissioner made his decision on 11 February 2015. Decision WMPCC 002/2015 2015/16 Revenue Budget, Precept, Capital Budget and Programme 2015/16 to 2018/19 can be found on the Commissioner's website at www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/transparency/record-of-decisions

The letters to the local authorities were sent out on 12 February 2015.

- The Panel had expressed concern that the Commissioner's proposed budget had been leaked to the newspapers. However, the Panel had discussed the proposed budget at its 19 January 2015 meeting and the Commissioner had consulted widely on his proposed budget because he was legally obliged to do so.
- Some of the Districts represented at the Panel had offered to help with the consultation next time.

The Board confirmed that the budget position was satisfactory.

017/15 Coventry Estate Update

017/15

The Director of Resources introduced the report which provided an update on the Coventry estate proposals following the public engagement exercise. He paid tribute to Chief Supt Claire Bell's excellent work on the public engagement exercise that she had undertaken in Coventry and asked that his thanks be put on public record.

The Board considered the report and during the discussion noted that:

- The proposals for the Coventry estate were split into two phases and the Force was asking the Board to consider the draft decision in respect of stage 1. The draft decision was attached to the report.
- The Force would be retaining the front offices at Coventry Central and Willenhall in the medium term. This was welcomed by the Board, in particular by Coventry Cllrs Faye Abbott and Tim Sawdon who also thanked Chief Supt Claire Bell for the tremendous amount of work she had put into the engagement exercise.
- The Force would still be considering the possibility of co-location with others. The Fire Service, for example, was keen and discussions were ongoing. However, the Force could not commit to anything until after the WMP2020 Blueprint was confirmed.

ACTION The Commissioner would make a formal decision to approve the disposal of Tile Hill, Radford and George Poole House properties as part of the Coventry LPU estate changes.

The Commissioner made the decision on 9 February 2015. WMPCC 001/2015 Coventry LPU Estate Review – Stage 1 can be found on the Commissioner's website at www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/transparency/record-of-decisions

018/15 Strategic Policing Requirement

018/15

The Chief Constable outlined the importance of this report before handing over to ACC Beale who went through each of the recommendations in turn. In particular, the Chief Constable drew attention to the following points:

- There were two main checks and balances that had been put in place when police and crime commissioners were first introduced: police and crime panels and the requirement to have regard to the national strategic policing requirement (SPR). The latter was concerned with the national policing infrastructure.
- Not only had HMIC inspected the Force's ability to respond to the SPR, the Force itself took its responsibilities in this regard very seriously. The Force conducted a rolling review of its ability to meet its national responsibilities.
- Recommendation 1 had prompted some media interest. *(This recommendation asked the Commissioner to acknowledge that although WMP demonstrates its capability to meet the local and national public order responsibilities, this was increasingly to the detriment of the delivery of non-emergency local policing during deployment periods.)* The Chief Constable indicated that it had always been a strain for the Force to provide large numbers of officers for national operations. Many forces were now finding this difficult

because of their reducing head counts. Some more consideration would have to be given to how public order policing was delivered across the country in future. It was important to note that WMP received more mutual aid than it gave.

The Board considered the report and during the wide-ranging discussion noted the following points.

- The Chief Constable assured the Board that the Force would still have the capability to respond to 999 calls at times when officers were deployed out of the Force area as part of a public order deployment.
- In response to a question about the CT Futures programme, the Chief Constable explained that over the past 18 months two activities had been running in parallel:
 - I. The Chief Constable had been leading nationally on applying a priority based budgeting approach to the current Counter Terrorism deployment but with a slightly different emphasis on risk to ensure that the basic deployment was appropriate to the risks being faced. A significant amount of redeployment and around £20m of potential savings had been identified. The Force were likely to gain from the process.
 - II. The Government had been looking at the threat level and providing extra funding. The Force would be gaining from this. A number of officers and staff would be deployed into counter terrorism around some specific new areas. The Force might have around 40-50 funded posts beyond the current recruitment plans. Posts would be advertised nationally but there would be some residual pull in police officer numbers coming from the Force. That needed to be accounted for in the Force's recruitment plans. There might be a need to extend the timescales of the recruitment exercise, for example. The Chief Constable would discuss this with the Commissioner if this were to be the case.
- The Police and Crime Panel had expressed some concerns about the number of officers leaving the Force and the number being recruited. However, the Commissioner and the Chief Constable had always been very clear that, in respect of the current recruitment of officers, this would not be a growth in the total number of officers. The recruitment exercise was to offset against numbers that the Force was losing. In regard to officers leaving the Force, while A19 was no longer operated, many officers chose to retire after 30 years service.
- WMCTU was part of the Force. Any officers who were reaching their 30 years' service who wished to apply for posts in WMCTU would be welcome to do so.
- There was room for the Commissioner to have greater oversight of the Force's capability in respect of its own resources but oversight of the CT element was slightly different because the WMCTU were working on behalf of the whole country.

- The Chief Constable assured the Board that the way in which policing services were delivered in future under the WMP2020 blueprint would not threaten the Force's interoperability capability. Everything had to sit within some national standards, including information technology.
- Cllr Foster commended the Force on its approach to the policing of EDL demonstrations and other events. Its approach was thoughtful, pragmatic and realistic. The Chief Constable responded that the Force prided itself on its style of policing for these events. Officers from other parts of the country who provided mutual aid were usually from other forces in the region who trained with the West Midlands Police. The training was in national tactics and the officers who would be providing policing services in Dudley during the weekend of 7 February would be under the Gold control of ACC Cann. Local policing in Dudley would be augmented but there would be a cost in other areas.
- The Board wished to understand better the organised crime strategy in relation to the public protection arena. **ACTION A briefing at an informal Board meeting would be arranged.**

A briefing has been scheduled for the May 2015 meeting.

- The Chief Constable assured the Board that there was a considerable amount of collaborative planning for large scale events such as the NATO summit. There was also a process to debrief after the events. All of this helped to ensure that the number of officers present was justified and proportionate.
- ACC Beale assured the Board that the Force's ability to deal with spontaneous public disorder was thoroughly tested including mobilisation and intelligence structures and systems.
- It was important to note that the reference to cybercrime in the SPR was about infrastructure and the protection of national and domestic services. Internet fraud was a different matter.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Commissioner wished it to be put on public record, in relation to recommendation 1, that he believed that the Home Secretary needed to take action. West Midlands Police would continue to play its part in responding to national threats, but the Government needed to acknowledge that unfair funding, which hurt the West Midlands Police more than anywhere else, made fulfilling its national responsibilities at the same time as maintaining local policing increasingly difficult. The West Midlands needed a fairer deal.

019/15 Variations to the Police and Crime Plan

019/15

The Commissioner provided an update on the Police and Crime Panel's consideration of the draft variations to the Police and Crime Plan at its meeting on 2 February. Comments from the Panel had been generally positive. The Panel had welcomed the new format, for example, and some members had been pleased to see that roads policing featured in it as well as the general thrust toward the prevention of crime.

Comments from the Board on the draft Plan included the following.

- The stronger, safer, more prosperous communities theme could be developed more, perhaps through updates on progress on the Commissioner's website.
- Given the significant overlap between the SPR and the Commissioner's Plan, more reference to the SPR could be made in the Plan.

The discussion about the Plan prompted a discussion about the domestic violence strategy. Whilst the strategy rightly focused on victims, there was very little about working with domestic violence offenders. There was no strategy for preventing reoffending. With the recent changes to the Probation Service, now might be the right time to start developing a strategy.

020/15 West Midlands Police Change Portfolio

020/15

The Deputy Chief Constable introduced the report which provided an update on the WMP2020 change programme.

The Board noted the contents and during the discussion noted that:

- The WMP2020 Blueprint would be considered at the 17 March Board meeting.
- The Police and Crime Panel had considered a report on the work on the innovation and integration partnership at its 2 February meeting. It was difficult at this stage to provide them with any more than the theory at the moment. The Commissioner would be in a better position after the WMP2020 Blueprint was approved in March to help the Panel get a better understanding.

021/15 Performance against the 2014-15 milestones and deliverables in the Police and Crime Plan

021/15

The Deputy Chief Constable introduced the report which outlined the performance against the milestones and deliverables in the Police and Crime Plan.

The Board considered the report and during the discussion noted the following.

- The Board had discussed total recorded crime at its recent performance workshop with the Force.
- The Force would provide an update on Sentinel at a future meeting. **ACTION A date would be programmed in to the work plan.**
A note has been made on the work plan to programme in a report.
- The three most common areas of concern for members of the

public were speeding, parking on pavements and burglary. In relation to the latter, the Force were doing a lot of preventative work. Neighbourhood teams did a lot of work around speeding. For example, the community speed watch in Bournville. It was not just the traffic police who dealt with speeding.

- The Deputy and the Assistant Police and Crime Commissioners would consider how best the Police and Crime Commissioner's office could promote the success of the Stop and Search panels and support their work.

022/15 Use of Force Update

022/15

The Commissioner thanked ACC Cann for the comprehensive report which provided further information to that contained in the report submitted to the December meeting.

The Board considered the report and during the discussion noted that:

- The ethnicity data was expressed in terms of percentages. The actual figures were small. When expressed in percentages the differences appeared more marked.
- The Force did not currently track the criminal justice outcomes of cases in which tasers were used partly because of the amount of resource it would use and partly because it might not provide useful information about the reasons for using tasers.
- The Police Federation had recently called for all police officers to be issued with tasers in light of the raised threat level for police officers and staff. The Force was giving consideration to its response to the raised threat level which included its taser coverage. To give every officer a taser whilst on duty might not be a proportionate response and it would be a serious change in policing style. There were practical issues too about how long it would take to train all the officers in the use of tasers. Also the threat was to officers both on and off duty. Tasers could only be used by officers when they were on duty. The Chief Constable wanted to assure officers and staff that he would be doing all that he could in terms of officer and staff safety but he was also committed to defending the current policing model. He and ACC Beale would be meeting with the Federation shortly to discuss the matter.
- The Board was supportive of the Chief Constable's wish to protect the current style of policing and paid tribute to fact that the last discharge of a conventional firearm at an individual by the Force was in 2002.
- It might be worth considering recording the use of Taser geographically in the same way that stop and search was recorded.

023/15 Chief Constable Update

023/15

The Chief Constable updated the Board on the Nicola Payne case. Two men had recently appeared in court charged with her murder 23 years ago. The Chief Constable was particularly pleased for her family.

The Chief Constable had nothing to raise in the private meeting. As there were no other items on the private agenda, the Commissioner cancelled the private meeting.

	Outstanding Actions from Previous Meetings	
064/13	ACC Operations Portfolio Update	064/13
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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. 	
070/14	Decisions: Victims Services	070/14
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ACTION Alethea Fuller would provide Board members with the information about how the Ministry of Justice were currently monitoring how the money was spent and whether they were getting value for money. <p><i>An update will be provided in the Chief Executive's report for the 17 March informal Group meeting.</i></p>	
009/15	Chief Constable Update	009/15
	<p>Tim Sawdon asked the Chief Constable about the recent incident at Warwick University and whether any charges had been brought yet.</p> <p>ACTION The Chief Constable was not sure of the details and would let Mr Sawdon know outside of the meeting.</p>	