



## STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD

### Notes of meeting held on Tuesday, 5 January 2016 in Committee Room 2, Birmingham Council House, Victoria Square

Present: David Jamieson – Police and Crime Commissioner  
Cllr Yvonne Mosquito – Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner  
Cllr Judy Foster – Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner  
Brendan Connor – Board Member  
Cath Hannon – Board Member  
Ernie Hendricks – Board Member  
Cllr Tim Sawdon – Board Member

In attendance: David Thompson – Deputy Chief Constable  
Jonathan Jardine – Chief Executive  
Carl Foulkes – Assistant Chief Constable  
Stuart Gardner – Force Intelligence  
Alethea Fuller – Partnership and Engagement Manager  
David Wilkin – Director of Resources  
Mark Kenyon – Chief Finance Officer  
Karen Dawes – Business Support Officer

Members of the public also attended.

- 1. Conflicts of Interest**  
None.
- 2. Apologies**  
Apologies were received from Chief Constable Chris Sims, and Cllr Faye Abbott
- 3. Notes of the Last Meeting**  
Notes of the last meeting were agreed to be accurate.
- 4. Acceptance of Petitions**  
No petitions were submitted.
- 5. Public Questions**  
There were no questions received from the public.

6. **Questions from the Board on matters not on the agenda**

Three questions had been submitted to the Chief Constable. The questions were as follows:

- Q1. How many drivers have been stopped in regard to the regulations relating to drivers smoking in vehicles that have passengers under the age of 18 and what action has been taken in these instances?

*(Asked by Yvonne Mosquito)*

In response the DCC said that WMP had received and dealt with a number of enquires about this. No penalties had been issued. Public Health England will be running a national campaign and advice and information will be given rather than penalties at this stage.

- Q2. What steps will the Chief Constable take to respond to the recent HMIC reports and their recommendations for child protection and addressing vulnerability?

Links, for background:

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/news/news-feed/police-forces-in-england-and-wales-must-improve-the-service-they-offer-to-vulnerable-victims/>

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/news/news-feed/west-midlands-police-is-making-progress-on-how-it-protects-children/>

*(Asked by David Jamieson)*

The DCC responded that the HMIC 'PEEL' inspections examined efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy. Their inspection of the Force's response to dealing with vulnerability found that the Force required improvement. The College of Policing has also been asked to review this area.

The PEEL inspection found that the Force's work with victims was good, but identified that the Force could improve its approach to dealing with offenders, and also raised concern about the classification of absent and missing children.

A Gold Group had been set up working under CS Claire Bell which involves working with partners. An Action Plan has been developed which will be sent to HMIC around all three reports.

It was acknowledged that the Force could not do this alone.

It was brought to the attention of the meeting that the Honour Based Violence report mentioned that WMP are one of the few forces working on this and that they are picking this up more. The force is working with high risk individuals and taking every opportunity to arrest, whilst recognising that arrest is not always the best course of action for the abuser and/or the family.

On the point of how quickly the Force can forensically examine electronic devices, the Force said that a lot of work is being done by forensics, and delays have been massively reduced.

The PCC asked about capacity to examine electronic devices and was told that there is

in-house capacity, but external contractors were also used. The unit is one of the best in the country and there had been improvements in triaging.

The DCC said that this was a good example of why policing needed to change over the next few years.

He also stated that with regards to vulnerability, a culture change was required especially in the wake of Rochdale and Rotherham. WMP were quite risk averse. Staff working in this area are wary about the implications of making mistakes. The force must be aware of the threat without being too risk averse and focus on the highest areas of risk. Louisa Rolfe, the new DCC, is the national lead on at risk children.

The force said it will carry on with work around process, systems and technology. Vulnerability is probably the largest area of work now for WMP.

Q3. In relation to Police Information Notices (PIN), could the Chief Constable state:

- a. How many notices relating to harassment were issued by WMP in 2014-15?
- b. What appeal mechanism exists to allow recipients of PINs to challenge the notice?
- c. Are PINs recorded and used by WMP in Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or other suitability checks for employment?
- d. What criteria are used by officers in the assessment of whether to issue a PIN?

*(Asked by Brendan Connor)*

The DCC responded that there were approx. 402 issued in 2014/15.

There is no appeal process. Notices were not usually used for a single incident, and are sometimes used as a prevention tool.

The Board asked whether it was possible for an officer to issue a PIN based on just one side of the story and was concerned that this could affect a person's employment prospects when DBS searches are made. There was concern expressed that this could be perceived as the police acting as judge and jury when there was no evidence of an offence.

The DCC responded that not all details were disclosed on a DBS check. He recognised that harassment can be disputable and that patterns of conduct are looked at, as harassment can lead to a much more serious crime.

The Board suggested that it would be sensible to collect information on this to ensure that notices were being issued correctly and the DCC said that he was happy to discuss this further outside the meeting.

The DCC said that he would check the regulations to see how long the notice would stay on an individual's record.

## 7. **Preliminary Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Proposals 2016/17**

Mark Kenyon from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner presented the paper and said that the formula will be redesigned in 2016 for potential use in 2017-18, with the potential that the Government could further top slice the police budget. There was uncertainty for the police, and planning would be affected by this. Details should be revealed by June 2016.

The proposed precept raise will form part of the funding and the PCC is seeking the views of the Police and Crime Panel and the public.

The Government's assumption is that there will be £5.00 increase on Band D properties over the next 4 years for the ten lowest precepting areas. The government's assumption is that the year on year increase would continue for four years, resulting in a total increase of £20.00, but this would be subject to further consultation with the public.

Forces around the WMP area have a much higher precept, and Greater Manchester's is £152 compared to WMP £106.

Mark Kenyon said the budget consultation included asking for views on the precept increase to be considered. There would be a loss to the West Midlands Police budget of 0.6% if the precept is not increased. It was noted that for the areas that had a higher precept, the potential maximum increase is 1.99%.

The budget showed that there was still a commitment to continued recruitment, community safety funding maintained for two years, and no compulsory redundancies for PCSOs.

The PCC is to make a final decision by 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016.

The Board said the increase was not ideal, but realised that the proposed increase was important to the Force's financial planning. They would like to see WMP receive additional funding in the future and felt that WMP were being penalised for being an efficient force.

It was acknowledged that even if there were an increase over the next 4 years, the West Midlands precept will still be the second lowest in the country.

The PCC will report to the Police and Crime Panel on 18 January. Comments from the Police and Crime Panel, leaders and the public to be taken into consideration.

## 8. **Victims Commission**

Alethea Fuller gave a brief overview of all sections of the report saying that there was a lot more work to do in areas such as identifying gaps and ensuring that the voice of the victim is heard.

The PCC asked whether a satisfaction survey could form part of the monitoring process.

There was concern over potential reductions in the budget reducing the services offered as there had been some indication from the Government that the budget would be top sliced. Alethea Fuller said it would be difficult to see how a rational decision could be taken to reduce the budget.

The DPCC commended the report.

The DCC said the report was helpful and that the force was keen to find the best way of delivering help to victims in the future.

9. **Disproportionality in police misconduct proceedings**

ACC Foulkes introduced the report and Stuart Gardner – Force Intelligence – explained that the statistics were created using 3 years of data.

The PCC said that complaints about officers can be debilitating and asked the force how Black and Asian officers were deployed. He also asked why BME officers were not progressing as quickly as other officers.

The DCC responded that it would be illegal to post BME officers based on the make-up of the community. Certain areas have a higher staff turnover, but as there was a lot more experience to be gained some officers opted to be placed in those areas. He also said that some BME officers were more comfortable working in areas where there was a higher percentage of BME officers.

The Board said that the Greater Manchester report found that complaints mainly came from functional areas such as response and traffic and felt that there was a need to look at functional areas within the WMP area as this may give a more accurate picture. They also felt it was important to challenge the stats if the Force was serious about having more diversity within the Force.

It was recognised that this report would form part of a larger programme of activity.

10. **Recruitment**

The force is half way through the recruitment process for PCs, and is still on target to recruit the intended 450 officers. The PCC and WMP would also be looking at whether it would be possible to increase that figure.

With regards to the force resembling the people it represents, some improvements in disproportionality have already taken place, but more work still needs to be done.

The DCC said that the force needs to look at what happens before people apply. Currently, there is work being done to help BME applicants to perform as best they can and they are also working with other forces to look at different approaches and positive action.

Both the PCC and the DCC confirmed that the aim is ultimately to get the best candidates for the positions, and it was acknowledged that the BME candidates that did apply were of a high calibre.

The PCC enquired about what difficulties lie between individuals applying and becoming police officers.

The DCC said that a number of candidates failed the vetting stage and the force is informing candidates more clearly about vetting requirements at the beginning of the process. There have also been issues at the assessment centre stage, especially in the situational judgement test, as it could be a case of BME applicants overthinking the situations and answering on what they thought would be expected of them rather than on what they would actually do in that situation.

The Board asked whether there was a moral obligation to contact some of the applicants and put them through the process again based on the situation test realisation.

The DCC said that he would look into this and that he was keen to keep focus on equality.

The PCC said that he wanted to look closely at the next 2 cohorts, and let those involved know what the objectives are.

11. **SPCB Workplan**

No comments from the Board.

12. **Chief Constable Update**

The DCC provided an update on the following matters:

- The last two months had been busy with rises in a number of types of crimes, particularly violent crimes over the Christmas period.
- He acknowledged the work of staff who worked over the period particularly those in homicide
- Gun crime – the DCC reiterated that this was a priority for the force. There was a level of concern over the increase at which firearms are being discharged. The force had a huge amount of confidence in bringing people to justice and it was important that the public believe that this is the case. He acknowledged that public support was required.

**End of Meeting**