



STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD

Tuesday 24 May 2022

1000 – 1300 hrs

Attendees:

Gregg Arrand	:	Staff Officer
Charmaine Burton	:	Board Member
Rowland Dunn	:	Independent Custody Visitor
Simon Foster	:	Police and Crime Commissioner
Alethea Fuller	:	Deputy Chief Executive
Andrea Gabbitas	:	Head of Business Services
Jonathan Jardine	:	Chief Executive
Vanessa Jardine	:	Deputy Chief Constable
Mark Kenyon	:	Chief Finance Officer
Caroline Marsh	:	Head of Public Protection Unit
Sarah Matta	:	Volunteer Coordinator
Tom McNeil	:	Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner
Pam Powis	:	Senior Service Manager for Birmingham City Council Community Safety Team
Laura Rogers	:	Regional Lead for MARAC and Domestic Abuse Safeguarding
Carol Rowe	:	Independent Custody Visitor

Plus, one note taker and four observers.

Notes:

1. *The meeting was recorded, and a webcast of the entire discussion can be viewed here: [SPCB May - 24.05.22 - Tuesday, 24th May 2022 at 10:00am - West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner Webcasting \(public-i.tv\)](#)*
2. *The reports referred to throughout this meeting can be viewed here: [SPCB May 2022 - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner \(westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk\)](#)*
3. *Actions arising from the discussion during the meeting are highlighted in bold text.*

044/22	<p>Item 1 - PCC Update:</p> <p>The Commissioner made the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commissioner reflected that significant progress has been made during his first year in post. Representing the West Midlands has been an honour and a privilege, driving the Commissioner to act in ensuring West Midlands Police are the best they
---------------	---

	<p>can be in order to prevent crime. The Commissioner thanked his Team for their hard work. After an extensive consultation, the Police and Crime Plan was published in November 2021. Further, the Commissioner has more than doubled the number of independent domestic violence advocates and sexual violence advocates. Together with our VRU and Partners, we are working to tackle and prevent violent crime, including education within schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commissioner is making available £400,000 to help prevent crime and promote community safety through the Proceeds of Crime Act 2022. This money is being invested into communities through the “Helping Communities Fund.” All funded projects must contribute to crime prevention, reduction and community safety within the area. The Commissioner has provided each of the 8 neighbourhood policing units with a share of the budget, and encourages organisations to apply for the funding before the deadline by 1st June 2022. • The Commissioner shared results from the West Midlands wide survey. The findings illustrated how members of the public feel regarding stepping in when witnessing unacceptable male behaviour. The results coincide with the launch of the second phase of the Here and Now Campaign. Combating violence against women and girls is a key priority for the Commissioner. • It is with great sadness the Commissioner reflected on the death of Fahmida Chowdhury. She joined West Midlands Police in 2017, and alongside her work she was an active ambassador within Diversity and Inclusion Networks. She was a much loved and valued member of the VRU. Fahmida’s family are raising money in her name to build wells in countries less fortunate than ours. The Commissioner advised if you wish to donate, please contact the VRU or OPCC.
045/22	<p>Item 2 - Notes of the Last Meeting – 26 April 2022</p> <p>The notes were accepted as a correct record of the meeting.</p>
046/22	<p>Item 3 - Questions from Members of the Public:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>From the conclusion of the Dea John trial, there have not been many tensions of note, we think is a positive thing. However, this does not mean that people are not angry, frustrated, bewildered and shocked by this outcome. What is the response moving forward to connect with local individuals and communities in a meaningful way, to ensure their thoughts are being heard, to prevent crimes like these happening? (Asked by Kingstanding Network Group)</i> 2. <i>Trust and confidence in policing and in the judicial system is constantly being eroded, as a nation we are not starved of reports of inequalities and inequities and systemic racism and bias. Please explain what policies, procedural and governance changes will be made, and what difference your leadership will make in cultivating permanent change to eradicate inequalities and inequity. (Asked by Kingstanding Network Group)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commissioner expressed that the tragic death of Dea John was and shared his deepest condolences to the family. The Commissioner was given the opportunity to read the victim impact statement from Dea John’s mother, which was truly heart-rending, • The Commissioner attended a meeting in Kingstanding on 7th May in order to support a local community initiative to prevent violent crime and build trust and confidence. The Commissioner hopes to join a further meeting on 11th June. The Commissioner welcomes such initiatives and expressed the importance of engaging and working with local communities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commissioner’s aim is to ensure West Midlands Police becomes representative of the communities it serves whilst eliminating bias, disproportionality and racism within policing. • We need robust policing to ensure those intent on causing harm are held accountable. The Commissioner’s commitment is to focus on prevention, intervention and action to protect and save lives. • The Deputy Chief Constable echoed the Commissioner’s condolences to Dea John’s family and friends. • The Force have implemented Operation Aridity under the gold command of ACC Matt Ward in response to this tragedy. • The Force have joined weekly meetings with the community and partners in order to collectively understand and professionally challenge, holding each other to account. The Group came together at a time of crisis, and is now assisting under a new relationship allowing police and partners to work collaboratively. • The Force are working with the Chair of the Birmingham Black Faith Leader’s Forum and Urban Devotion in Birmingham. • The Force recognise there is limited provision for young people within Kingstanding. A scoping exercise is taking place to better understand demand, the need and opportunities within this area. • The work carried out by Faith Partners is supported, including Bishop Desmond Jadoo. • The Force are continuing to work closely with Dea John’s family. • There are 7 community priorities, and every department and portfolio holder are leading within this area in ways that are relevant to their area of business. • The Force aim to improve the knowledge of all staff in terms of historical learning concerning relationships with different communities. • Strategic objectives have been implemented to understand and reduce racial biases through academic partnerships. Formal research through the College of Policing has been carried out to explore the causes of ethnic and racial disparities in the use of police taser. • An Equality’s Assessment Framework has been implemented. • There is a creation of a new Diversity and Inclusion Platform to support learning of diverse cultures. • There is an ask for colleagues to discuss topics concerning diversity and inclusivity.
--	---

<p>047/22</p>	<p>Item 4 - Questions from Members of the Board:</p> <p>1. <i>Members of the community continue to express serious concern around antisocial behaviour such as dangerous motorbike riding on pavements and crimes like car theft in their local communities, sometimes leading to a sense of fear and lawlessness. Can the Chief Constable tell us what neighbourhood policing’s response will be to these problems, and how the increase in police officers will be used to tackle these issues?</i> (Asked by Tom McNeil)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of years ago, the Force had the capability to travel “off road” however it was deemed disproportionate for police to continue to follow the route of dangerous motorbikes. • This is a critical issue for the community, and therefore the support and intelligence gathering from the community is crucial. • Drones have recently been used to track riders. Retrospectively, riders remain close to their own homes, meaning police can gain a warrant to search houses and seize bikes.
----------------------	---

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through Neighbourhood Policing Teams, the community are kept updated of anti-social behaviour through leaflets and the encouraged use of WM Now. • The Force are considering negotiations with Birmingham and Sandwell Local Authorities for the potential implementation of noise cameras to target anti-social behaviour. <p><i>Follow Up: Is there a sense from the Force that the ability to tackle anti-social behaviour is likely to be improved as a result of the uplift? (Asked by Tom McNeil)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Force advised that they are investing more resources into neighbourhood policing, along with the Drones Team. This has proved to be an effective way of dealing with this matter. <p>2. <i>Community leaders continue to express concern that neighbourhood police officers are rotated to other police departments which interrupt strong working relationships and partnerships with the community. Is there anything more West Midlands Police can do to either reduce the number of rotations, or mitigate the impact on community partnerships, such as a more formalised process of handing over to new officers to ensure continuity? (Asked by Tom McNeil)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Force recognise this issue, and have discussed this with partners previously. • The Force are recruiting an additional 1,200 officers. This means that there are a number of police constables moving through the organisation at present. • Student Officer rotation has changed from 12 weeks to 6 months in order to ensure officers are within departments for a longer period of time. • Movement is partly due to officers wishing to take a different career path within the organisation, or due to promotions. • There must be an effective handover process when officers transfer roles. • Community relationships within neighbourhood policing is crucial. <p><i>Follow Up: Tom McNeil suggested implementing handover roundtables whereby community leaders, the previous officer and the new officer discuss and work through the developing issues.</i></p>
	<p>Regular Items</p>
<p>048/22</p>	<p>Item 5 - End of Year Performance Report:</p> <p>This report was presented by Deputy Chief Constable Vanessa Jardine and Mark Kenyon and the following points were discussed:</p> <p><i>Local reviews take place after a domestic abuse homicide regarding what the key lessons are. What are the key lessons that have arose from such incidents and what have the Force changed as a result to prevent domestic homicides from happening again?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic Homicides often have a limited police involvement, which is an area of concern for the Force. • Information Sharing between partners is a key factor in terms of reviews. • There is a strong partnership relationship with high risk domestic abuse cases, and gaps are more likely to be demonstrated within standard and medium risk cases. • Work must be completed in terms of raising awareness and encouraging people to report. • It is important to recognise the threat of standard and medium risks.

- Work has been undertaken within the Public Protection Unit. On occasion, victims disengage early with the process, which increases the difficulty of ensuring the appropriate safeguarding measures are in place.

The Performance Paper has exemplified the extraordinary rise in fraud. What would the key strategies be to prevent fraud? What extent are the Force proactively advocating these to other agencies?

- All reports of fraud are sent to Action Fraud based within the City of London Police.
- The information details intervention within the report as often, perpetrators of fraud are not within the West Midlands.
- The Force's strategy is around education, awareness and engagement.
- The Force examine Action Fraud's data for trends within the West Midlands.

Follow up: Between the Force and other fraud agencies, is there enough investment going into prevention activities?

- It is helpful that Action Fraud is coordinated within one place.
- The Force have excellent engagement with Action Fraud, with regular conversations and transfers of information.

Are the Force concerned that the cost of living crisis will create an increase in demand for West Midlands Police? Has this created a greater urgency in police partnership working?

- The Force confirmed they are concerned of the cost of living crisis. Inevitably, the Force will see a number of crimes increase as a result of the crisis. It should be well documented that people are struggling financially.
- Partnership working is critical to offer support to people struggling, including partnerships with volunteer communities.

There has been an increase in vehicle crime published on social media. What advice are the Force giving to the public on how they can protect their vehicles?

- The Force have seen an increase in members of the public leaving personal items within their cars. There is a media campaign at present to encourage people to hide their property, or to not leave items in the car.
- As soon as a vehicle is stolen, it is flagged on ANPR systems. The Force are seeing a high number of vehicles recovered.
- Making vehicles harder to steal needs to be focused upon. Due to enhanced keyless technology, it is now easier for cars to be stolen.
- Dedicated operations are taking place across the West Midlands; however, it should be noted this is also a broader industry issue.

There are tensions between our Police and Crime Plan and the National Policing Measures which are a narrow subset; rape and serious sexual offences are an example of this. Noting this, if a victim is unwilling to proceed through the Criminal Justice process, what activity is underway to address this issue?

- The Force are currently implementing an operation amongst Public Protection Teams, especially concerning incidents of rape. Victim attrition is a significant issue.
- The Force have seen positive changes in the performance and outcomes regarding rape.
- The operation is a national programme, running throughout the summer period into September.
- It is crucial to understand what the blockages are in receiving good outcomes for victims.
- The Force are focusing on the wellbeing and capability of staff, also ensuring sufficient resources are in place to address such issues.

	<p><i>We can expect summer demand to be high. The night time economy has reopened which can be associated with incidents of violence. What would be the Force's approach to ensure the night time economy is as safe as possible throughout the summer?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In terms of the Commonwealth Games, the Force are using officers from across the country through mutual aid to support our policing operations. • The Force have a dedicated operation that runs in Birmingham for the night time economy. Key weekends of the year are identified, where the Force expect to see significant increases and therefore implement additional resources into the economy. • The events throughout the summer are well planned and the Force are aware of the additional resources required. <p><i>There has been a publication of data nationally regarding police performance for call waiting times. What action are the Force currently taking to address the call waiting times for 101 and 999 calls?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a concern for the Force and the community. • A new process will be implemented in due course, whereby a new desk will be set up in Force Contact regarding non-emergency calls relating to vulnerability being taken by a dedicated Team who have received additional training. They will work a 24/7 shift pattern. • The Force are anticipating this will add capacity for staff to take 101 and 999 calls. <p>The Commissioner added that the Deputy Chief Constable had referenced his campaign to encourage car manufacturers to take further action as they must improve vehicle security to prevent theft. Between 1992 and 2006, the Home Office published an annual car theft index that showed cars most at risk of being stolen. The Commissioner has now published a car theft index for the West Midlands and has written to the Home Office urging it to recommence a car theft index for the UK, to allow consumers to exercise an informed choice, to encourage car manufacturers to improve security and to hold car manufacturers to account.</p>
<p>049/22</p>	<p>Item 6 - Custody Visiting and Appropriate Adult Update:</p> <p><i>This report was presented by Andrea Gabbitas and Sarah Matta and the following points were discussed:</i></p> <p><i>Tom McNeil expressed his thanks to the ICV's for the work they undertake and for sharing their experiences with the Board.</i></p> <p><i>What is the process a volunteer has to undertake in order to become a Custody Visitor?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an application process which leads to shortlisting and interviews. If successful, volunteers are taken through the vetting process. • If vetting is passed, volunteers are given a tour of their local custody site. Volunteers are then assigned to the Team and are implemented on a rota. New volunteers will then visit custody with more experienced volunteers to learn and integrate with the system. • After being in the post for 6 months, a review will take place to discuss how the volunteer is progressing. • Training events are also held. <p><i>It was mentioned that solicitors were reluctant to return to custody, why is this?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solicitors transferred to working remotely as a consequence of the pandemic. As restrictions have been lifted and people are returning to work, solicitors have remained uncertain of returning to custody due to potential health impacts. • Solicitors have advised they can talk to more detainees from the office, oppose to travelling from site to site.

- Detainees appear to prefer one to one communication with their solicitors.

The ratings for women's hygiene and cleanliness of the cells and showers are categorised as red. Do you feel custody visitors are being heard?

- The ICV's do feel they are being heard. Matters are reported.

A number of the ratings are unsatisfactory. Strategically, what is being done in order to improve the ratings which affect people's basic human rights?

- Each time a red rating is received, it is raised and reported.
- The visitor will try to rectify the red rating on site initially. If it cannot be rectified, the Volunteer Coordinator will then follow it through with the onsite officers.
- Quarterly meetings are held with the Superintendent from the department where frequent issues can be discussed.

Sarah Matta was recognised for her work in this post. What is our assessment of our approach to ensuring the welfare of the volunteers? There is passing commentary regarding delays and accessibility for appropriate adults for children. How would we seek to address these issues?

- The Commissioner appreciates that our appropriate adults deal with difficult cases and information. We offer the opportunity to seek counselling to discuss areas of concerns. This is reinforced during training.
- Trauma Informed Training has also been provided to volunteers.
- The Commissioner wishes to implement an increasingly structured approach.
- Unlike adults, there is a statutory responsibility to provide an appropriate adult for all children within custody. This is the responsibility of the local authority.
- The Volunteer Coordinator has met with the local authority to gather performance data in relation to providing appropriate adults for children.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of the scheme? Is there anything that could be improved?

- There is a value in custody visiting. Often, people wish to speak to a custody visitor to share their concerns and discuss their personal needs.
- The training provided to volunteers is outstanding, however the role places focus towards on the job learning.

Do either of the ICV's in attendance have any involvement with the National Independent Custody Visitors Association?

- *The ICV's in attendance do not have any involvement with the association.*

What are the ICV's in attendance personal motivations for becoming involved in the voluntary scheme?

- Carole Rowe advised that she is a retired social worker and has therefore always being involved in contributing to the community.
- It is a privilege for detainees to feel comfort in speaking to volunteers.
- Rowland Dunn is also retired and finds the role satisfying.

The Commissioner thanked the ICV's for attending the meeting and sharing their experiences. This is a vital service. The Police have the power to lawfully detain and question people for the purpose of a police investigation, however this power must not go unchecked. The Commissioner has a statutory duty to provide an independent custody visitor scheme and thanked the volunteers who attend custody to provide a measure of accountability, oversight, reassurance and scrutiny of the police detention process. The volunteers go above and beyond and deserve all our thanks. Tribute was paid to Sarah Matta for administering the scheme before she moves onto her new post.

	Partnership Presentation
--	---------------------------------

050/22	<p>Item 7 - Improving Community Safety:</p> <p><i>This report was presented by Alethea Fuller, Pam Powis and Laura Rogers and the following points were discussed:</i></p> <p><i>In terms of addressing the risks of perpetrators themselves, is a significant part of the MARAC assessment regarding actions we can take to address perpetrator behaviour?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MARAC discussion includes time to discuss victim safeguarding and child safeguarding, and also options for support and referrals for the perpetrator. • If complex needs are identified, referrals are considered. Consent is required from the individual before referrals can be made. <p><i>Have MARAC had any success with directing perpetrators to support services? When an assessment is made regarding the appropriate referrals, is there a systematic follow up of the assessment?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Success has been demonstrated regarding perpetrator intervention, most often with those that meet the criteria for police offender management which is the most consistent referral route at this time. • Actions are tracked after MARAC to ensure consistent safeguarding. There are usually three to five actions assigned to a case. All agencies associated with these actions are tasked with keeping MARAC informed. <p><i>Is the Consequences Programme successful?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The course is directed at those car cruising and focuses on the consequences of driving fast and illegally. • If individuals attend the course, they will not be subject to criminal prosecution. • 9 individuals attended the first course. • As a consequence of the pandemic, delivery of the course was delayed. <p>The Commissioner thanked Pam Powis and Laura Rogers for their attendance, and advised an extended discussion on the matter will take place in due course.</p>
---------------	---

	Police and Crime Plan
--	------------------------------

051/22	<p>Item 8 - Preparing for the Commonwealth Games:</p> <p>This report was presented by Dave Sturman and the following point were discussed:</p> <p><i>Have any new risks materialised that had not been planned for?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No new risks have arisen whilst the tests have taken place. <p><i>How much of a legacy do you think will be left behind by West Midlands Police in relation to the games?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Force are reasonably confident they are delivering on legacy. • There will be a debrief on this, with the potential opportunity for a charitable trust to continue this work after the conclusion of the Commonwealth Games. <p><i>The report advises staff will be wearing PPE. Is this the case for those travelling to the UK from countries of concern?</i></p>
---------------	---

- Health screening of people entering the country is the organiser's responsibility to consider with public health authorities, however this is definitely on the Force's radar.
- There is a strict regime of public health control measures.
- Within a UK context, we have almost returned to pre-Covid control measures for major events.
- Organisers wish to maximise attendance whilst ensuring pragmatic control measures are in place.

Tickets are becoming scarce, meaning ticket touts may become more prevalent. What will the Force's approach be towards the bylaws?

- The organising committee are working with the relevant local trading standard officers to consider issues such as ticket touting. Police will support these issues where necessary.
- Each venue has a defined geography and footprint.
- The Force have a master events list. All parallel events are going through security coordinator assessments.

Up to 17,000 mutual aid officers are required from other police forces for each day of the games. Are West Midlands Police where they need to be in relation to the mutual aid operation? Will the police officers be in place at the start of the games?

- The Force confirmed they will have the resources.
- Forces have pledged to commit their post; however, the Force need the names against the nominations. This is a work in progress.
- We have strong relations with the organisations responsible for the coordination of national mutual aid.
- Shortages have been noted around niche capability. The Force are confident these gaps will be closed.

What are the plans in place to be able to deal with the pressures placed on the public transport network and issues of resilience?

- This is work in progress.
- There is still ongoing modelling regarding traffic management, particularly for the larger venues.
- There is an active working group including relevant stakeholders considering these issues.

Rest days may have an impact on business and ongoing policing. Could the steps be outlined that are being taken to minimise any issues?

- There will be a legacy of cancelled rest days, which will be an opportunity cost for the organisation.
- A decision will be made in due course, concerning rest days being reinstated.
- The more rest days reinstated the better.
- Once the Force are content resources have been secured, rest days can be reinstated.

There will be a new innovative app functioning by the commencement of the Commonwealth Games. Could assurances be given that the app will be functioning?

- The Force confirmed the app will be functioning by the commencement of the games.

The Commissioner added that 3000 officers and staff will be working on the Commonwealth Games every day, to ensure we are safe and secure. To increase the capacity of the force, officers will be working 12-hour shifts. There has been a significant amount of planning in

	place to ensure a safe and friendly games this summer. The Commissioner will continue to provide oversight and scrutiny to promote public trust in relation to these arrangements.
052/22	<p>Item 9 - Chief Constable Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Deputy Chief Constable provided an update regarding the death of a child at Birmingham Children’s Hospital. This is an ongoing and complex investigation. In relation to the report received from the hospital, the Force have arrested a 27-year-old female in connection with the death. The child sadly passed away at the hospital. The female was arrested on administering poison with intent to danger life. The family of the child are being supported. • A new police action plan has recently been launched aiming to address racial disparities and to change a legacy of distrust. The Chief Constable is leading on this work nationally. The plan sets out a commitment of chief constables in England and Wales to become an anti-racist police service. West Midlands Police will incorporate any action that has not already been implemented within their Fairness and Belonging Strategy.
053/22	<p>Item 10 - SPCB Workplan:</p> <p>There are 14 matters that remain outstanding.</p>
054/22	<p>Item 11 - Date of the Next Meeting:</p> <p>The next Strategic Policing and Crime Board will take place on Tuesday 28th June 2022.</p>