

# Meeting Notes

## **Kent Police and Crime Commissioner's**

### **Governance Board – Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> August 2013**

Clift Room, Kent Police Headquarters, Sutton Road, Maidstone, Kent ME15 9BZ

#### **PART A**

##### **1. Welcome**

The Commissioner formally welcomed everyone to the Governance Board and gave apologies for the Chief of Staff Mike Stepney who was on Annual Leave and also for the Chief Finance Officer Sean Nolan who had been taken ill and was in hospital. She also introduced Laura Steward, PCC Senior Policy Officer.

##### **2. Notes of previous meeting – 18<sup>th</sup> June 2013**

The Commissioner and the Chief Constable agreed that the last set of minutes were a true and accurate record, and that they had also been passed to the HMIC.

##### **3. HMIC Report on Crime Recording and Performance Culture - Force Recovery Plan Update**

The Commissioner referred to this report and stated she is looking into the future and not the past. The Force is working hard on the Recovery Plan which is very comprehensive, and HMIC had nothing to add. The Commissioner stated that delivering a good service to residents and victims of crime is key and she is happy with the progress made.

The Chief Constable talked through the Recovery Plan and gave an overview of progress to date. The key elements were to look at the Force's processes to ensure they were adequate. This consisted of looking at the initial call when it came into the Control Room, the allocation of resources to deal with the incident - right through to the interaction of the officer at the scene and the IMU staff, thereby covering the whole journey. The second key element was quality checks which have been introduced at all levels, including dip checks by the Sergeants, Inspectors and Supervisors. For some offences there is quality assurance carried out by the Deputy Chief Constable.

The role of the supervisors has also been looked at with a view to making sure that they are adequately supervising, not only in the IMU process but also the officers and PCSOs across the County. The training requirements have also been looked at, particularly in relation to determining if it is recorded as a crime or subsequently no-crimed and final resolutions.

The Chief Constable referred to the HMIC Recovery Plan meeting on the 6 August where the Commissioner was able to meet with key members of staff including representatives from the Superintendents' Association and Unison.

The Chief Constable stressed a note of caution; even with all of the above in place, ensuring the

staff are getting the right information to make the right decisions, and the new processes will help ensure they get this, the final determination of whether it is a crime or no-crime is a 'subjective decision' made by an individual which is made on the best information they have available to them. The Chief Constable offered his reassurance that the processes are solid and sound and the Crime Registrar is the final arbiter of all decisions.

The Commissioner asked if there were any minor issues that the HMIC flagged up.

The Chief Constable informed the meeting that it was quite the contrary. The Force shared the Action Plan with HMIC; they were very satisfied and were keen to get a copy of the work the Force had done to take to other Forces.

The Chief Constable informed the meeting that an appeals process had been put in place for crimes which are subsequently no crimed. Kent is the only Force doing this. The Crime Registrar will still be the final arbiter.

There is a survey taking place but it is in the early stages. Victims whose crimes are subsequently no crimed were being invited to participate in a satisfaction survey, this was showing positive results, but it was still early days.

The Chief Constable reported that the outcomes of the review of Force culture are an on-going process. The changes are due to the Force's internal reviews and the Force will be conducting another review in the future.

The Chief Constable is happy that the Force will get a 'clean bill of health' when the HMIC return later in the year.

In relation to crime figures and statistics the Commissioner stated she is not interested in short term fluctuations. She flagged up that her Police & Crime plan has targets over 4 years; these are strategic ambitions but she doesn't want officers getting the impression that they have to chase the numerical targets – so next February when she refreshes her Plan, she will look carefully at dropping those 4 year aspirational numbers, as long as the Chief Constable can clearly demonstrate and reassure her that the Force has an effective Force Performance Management arrangement that looks at continuous improvement over the 4 years and focuses on quality policing and delivering an excellent service to residents.

Laura Steward commented on point 18 of the Report, that the review is still being conducted and asked would the update come to the Governance Board later this year. The Chief informed the meeting that this would be presented as part of the monthly update on the Recovery Plan – both to the interim Board for more in-depth consideration, as well as the Governance Board.

#### **4. Thematic Performance Review:**

- (a) Violent Crime against the person**
- (b) Satisfaction**

4a - The Commissioner referred to Violent Crime against the person and stated that the figures were up. She asked the Chief Constable to pick out the key points from his report, direction of travel, particular tactical initiatives he was putting in place, victims and quality services.

The Chief Constable informed the meeting of the areas that are causing the Force concerns: there has been an increase in violence over the last 7/8 months and Kent is not alone; other Forces are also seeing these increases.

The two key areas are domestic abuse and the night-time economy.

In relation to domestic abuse; there has been an increase in reporting domestic abuse which in itself is not a bad thing as it is showing that victims are more willing to report crime. The majority of the reporting is first time domestic abuse victims and there is a decrease in repeat offenders which again is good. The Force are working closely with the CPS to try and make sure that the journey of a victim of domestic abuse is as smooth as possible and encouraging reporting as early as possible. The Force are also working on the time that it takes to get offenders to court, at the moment it can take approximately 5 months so the victims sometimes withdraw their statements, the Chief Constable would like to see it taken to court within a week.

The Chief Constable also mentioned that there has been a change in the type of domestic abuse. It is now also taking place out on the street as well as behind closed doors, these are mostly drink related.

The Chief Constable commented that the night time economy means that town centres have a different feel compared to during the day. There is a programme in place that involves a high profile presence where they believe the violence takes place. The Force is working with partners, particularly those involved in the night-time trade to see how they can work together.

One of the tactics used is the evidence capture car, this helps capture evidence for low level crime; common assaults etc. The Force is looking at taking on the prosecution of lower level violence to process them quicker. This is something the Deputy is currently working on.

The Deputy Chief Constable informed the meeting that this could be 80% of the low level violent crime.

The key areas for violence in the night-time economy are Chatham, Gillingham, Folkestone, Maidstone & Margate, so the operations are mainly around these key areas.

The Chief also mentioned that because the officers are 'out there', being visible helps to stop it at source. In addition, officers' presence means crimes get picked up and put on as crime reports which would otherwise not get reported so these are adding to the figures.

The Commissioner asked the Chief to comment on the withdrawal of CCTV.

The Chief Constable stated that lots of the evidence comes from CCTV. It is also a deterrent for people; they do tend to moderate their behaviour. It is a very good evidential capture for the Force.

The Chief Constable informed the Commissioner that the victim satisfaction for offences of violence is very high, so whilst the numbers are going up the victims are happy with the actions/activities of the Force.

The Commissioner asked, if domestic violence figures were taken out of the violence against a person figures, how is the direction of travel for everything else?

The Chief Constable stated that Domestic violence is around 40% of violence, so if taken out it still shows an increase in the night-time economy violence.

4b – The Commissioner, mentioned the 3 areas being looked into -

- overall satisfaction
- overall victim satisfaction
- Public satisfaction

And asked the Chief Constable to highlight the key issues.

The Chief Constable said that the key focus is service delivery. Kent Police have been very well placed in terms of satisfaction levels, in the 3 areas above the force have always been very high and always in the top 2/3/4 forces. It has been 'fairly static' for some time, which means less than 1% change in all 3 areas.

Despite the high level of satisfaction, the key challenge is keeping people informed of the progress of crime/incident they have reported. The Force is working on this in a number of ways, including via the Chief Constable's Road shows around the county at the moment.

Appendix A - The Satisfaction thematic and the recommendations, showing some of the key points was discussed.

Overall Satisfaction – 8/10

Overall Victim Satisfaction 9/10

Public Satisfaction (within Kent) 8/10

Laura Steward asked if technology for reporting crime and keeping victims updated, i.e. texts, emails was part of the review. The Chief Constable stated it is something the force is looking into.

## **5. HMIC National Studies – Implications for Kent Police**

The Commissioner informed the meeting that she feels it is important that we all know what is being done nationally and how Kent fits in to the national picture. She asked if there were any specific implications for Kent.

The Chief Constable briefly went through the HMIC reviews and gave an outline and update for Kent's position.

With regards to the review of the section 136 in relation to the use of police custody for the detention of people with mental health issues there were no specific recommendations for Kent but there is a generic one that Custody Officers should be aware that a full explanation is recorded in the custody record to explain why the person is in the care of the police rather than in a medical facility.

The European arrests warrants: Kent was one of 9 forces that was involved. There were no recommendations for the Police; all were for SOCA or the National Crime Agency.

Stop & Search: there were 10 recommendations for the Police Service, nothing specific for Kent. They are already being considered with the main one looking at the quality and consistency of reports.

Valuing the Police: there were very positive comments on the way that Kent have undertaken and achieved the savings so far and how Kent have been innovative in making the savings.

Quality of prosecution files: there were 7 recommendations, mainly around the poor quality paperwork. Supervision and training is needed to ensure this is done right and is being worked on.

The Commissioner asked if the loss of police staff has had an effect on this?

The Chief Constable agreed that the amount of paperwork and pressure on officers is debilitating at times as it can take so long to complete the most basic paperwork. A lot of this paperwork is for the Home Office and HMIC to hold the Force to account.

The Commissioner asked about Para 10 in relation to improving the quality of case files. It recommended that Forces should explore training for Police supervisors where they join with CPS. The Commissioner enquired if this is happening in Kent?

The Chief Constable confirmed that talks are taking place regarding the quality of case files. These discussions are on-going. A discussion took place regarding if files can be provided electronically – this cannot be done as the courts will not accept it electronically.

**ACTION:** Commissioner & Laura Steward to speak to CPS about the issues above.

## **6. Update on current figures in relation to Hate Crime**

The Commissioner spoke about the difficulty of reporting a crime as a hate crime and wanted everyone to have a better understanding around this. She also asked the Chief Constable to inform the meeting about officer training for Hate Crime.

The Chief Constable agreed with the Commissioner regarding the terrible nature of this crime. The areas that Hate Crime falls into are Religion, Race, Sexual orientation and Disability, the Force also recognises Age.

It was agreed that training is important for an officer to determine on the scene if the incident is a Hate Crime or not.

The Commissioner asked if victims of Hate Crime were brought in to help training. It was reported that at the moment they don't, and the Commissioner stated that if required she knew of people who would be happy to assist with training.

## **PART B**

## **7. Financial Monitoring and Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR1 & CSR2)**

The Commissioner informed the Chief Constable that there was a very positive response from HMIC, and because of the early planning in Kent we are in a strong position.

The Commissioner asked the Chief Constable to talk through CSR1 and also the planning and implications for CSR2 including how the model will look.

The Chief Constable informed the meeting that CSR1 started 3 years ago and it is a 4 year programme. Kent had to find 20% of the Central Government Grant which equated to approx. £47m. Kent started their savings programme 9 months before the start date, freezing recruitment of both Police Officers and Police Staff. This gave a significant cushion when CSR1 stated.

Significant progress has been made, primarily by reducing head count, as 84% of the budget is people. The other 16% is continuously monitored for savings. HR monitor the Head Count Management Plan: there has been a steady flow of people leaving, on average 16 Police Officers a month leave the organisation but at the moment it is around 23 a month. This is mainly natural wastage i.e. retirement.

There will be a gap year before CSR2 comes in so that will give some preparation time. CSR2 is 3.2% of the Government Grant which is £5.2m but there are other pressures that come in over that period. Once it is all added together with all the cost pressures the savings required are estimated at between £17-£23m, but the exact amount won't be known until further information arrives in October.

Part of the review is to look at the policing model which is currently deployed; this was designed after CSR1 came in. Built around neighbourhood policing, with a view to continue to deliver as much as possible. The Model is being looked at to see if it would still work once approx. £20m was taken out. The very early indications are that the model will survive but fine tuning will need to be done and maybe some amendments.

The Commissioner asked the Chief Constable if there was a 'tipping point', the Chief Constable agreed there is but at the moment he is unsure at which point that would be until it is looked into further. Recruitment is taking place at the moment as the Force have already reached their target head count, and it also brings new talent into the organisation.

One of the main challenges is to ensure we deliver the best service possible with the numbers that we have and managing expectations of everyone. At the end of this CSR period £70m would have been taken out of the budget.

The Chief Constable also spoke about the 'core' policing role and the difficulty with picking up work that other organisations should be picking up. For instance, noise nuisance can be a problem; the environmental health officers often aren't available so the Police will often get called. The biggest problem is mental health issues, officers are often sitting for long periods of time with members of the public with mental health issues instead of being able to do their jobs. The Force is working with partner agencies to try and get this problem resolved.

The Commissioner raised two issues. Firstly, people with mental health issues should not be in a police cell and secondly, if something were to happen to the individual then the officer in attendance would be investigated by the IPCC.

The Chief Constable agreed and gave assurances that the Force are working with mental health practitioners in developing a pilot scheme where they would go out on patrol with officers, as a fast track option. The Home Secretary had also raised this with the Health Minister.

The Commissioner asked whose job it was to transport the individual to a safe environment; the Chief Constable agreed this was a grey area but he has a meeting planned to discuss further with the Chief Executive from the Ambulance Service in the next few weeks to firm up what responsibility the ambulance service has. The Force will always ensure a duty of care is undertaken towards any individual.

## **8. Force Performance**

The Commissioner asked the Chief Constable to talk this through, concentrating on quality and direction of travel.

The Chief Constable informed the meeting of the 3 key challenges over the past 3 months; burglary, vehicle crime and violent crime.

Burglary: The Chief stated that while the figure in isolation shows an increase of 22.8% (revised figure) April–June 2013 vs 2012, this needs to be put into context, there are 700,000 households and 1.7m residents in the County, this averages to 21 (revised figure) a day. He stressed that the Force had been determined to reduce this figure, and as significant operations had been put in place, based on intelligence this has now dropped to 11 per day across the County. Direction of travel is stable.

Vehicle crime: there were organised teams stealing Land Rovers and another team stealing transit vans. The intelligence was good so operations were able to be put in place to deal with them. Direction of travel is seeing the number of crimes coming down.

Violent Crime: the Chief Constable referred back to earlier discussions. Night time economy is still being looked into. Direction of travel is increasing.

The Serious Crime Directorate is able to help with surveillance and covert techniques.

The Deputy Chief Constable spoke about his visit to Lancashire as they are very comparable to Kent. Lancashire are a month or two ahead of Kent around trying to have continuous improvement without targeted performance setting. They also have a 'joint vision' from the Chief Constable and the Commissioner complementing and understanding each other's roles so no confusion for 'rank & file staff'. Also discussed was the delivery of the communication message, this is already being done by Chief Constable Learmonth at his road shows, delivering to front-line staff. Another matter discussed during his visit was monitoring change and the wellbeing of staff, with CSR1 and changes taking place, it is making sure staff are dealing with the changes.

There are 2 senior members of staff working at the College of Policing who are doing some national work, "Performance versus Service Delivery".

The Commissioner asked what did Lancashire take from Kent? The Deputy Chief Constable informed the Commissioner that they took the Communication; they liked the idea that the Chief Constable is doing the communication for Kent, delivering the message to staff. Our outcome rate is approx. the same as Lancashire.

The Chief Constable informed the Commissioner that he has invited Alex Marshall from the College of Policing to look at Kent's 3 key areas; burglary, vehicle crime & violence to see if there is anything else the Force could be doing. ACC Price is linking in with them.

## **9. Update on Significant Operational Matters**

The Chief Constable provided an update on operational matters.

He spoke of the good work done by a dog handler who was flagged down, and was able to detain two suspects and offer support to a suspected rape victim. They have now been charged and awaiting a court date.

Some good incidents where the Serious Crime Directorate have worked on jobs resulting in arrests including; seizure of drugs and arms importations, seizure of 750kg of cannabis, a 9mm semi-automatic handgun and revolver. Another incident recovered a large amount of class A drugs and cash.

The deployment of approx. 75 Kent Officers to Northern Ireland for 2 weeks. They were deployed on the front line. The Chief Constable of NI was very complimentary of all officers. All of this was mutual aid so at no cost to the Force.

Recruitment opened to external applicants 2 weeks ago, over a 4 day period 1500 applications were received which the HR department are working through.

Predictive Policing day which took place yesterday was discussed. It was a very successful day, with approx. 23 arrests, there were 95 additional officers dedicated to the predictive policing zones, no additional costs. The amount of boxes visited (dosage) was 1219 visits, which accounted for 220 hours spent in the policing zones. Rough figures at the moment looked like a 10% reduction in crime over the 24hr period. This will be done again later in the year, maybe at different times of the day i.e 3pm-3am rather than 8am-8pm to focus on the night-time economy. There were also fewer incidents reported to the Force Control Room during that 24hr period. Officers from the Fire and Rescue Service also attended as well as County Wardens.

The Chief Constable informed the meeting that the predictive policing boxes are updated twice a day, but there are a number of them that are consistently produced and will always be in a particular area so the Force are looking to work with local authorities to see how they can make that area safer, and utilising crime prevention tactics like making the area lighter etc.

The Commissioner thanked everyone for attending.