

## Meeting Notes

**Title:** Governance Board  
**Date:** Wednesday 3 February 2016  
**Venue:** Clift Room, Kent Police Headquarters, Sutton Road, Maidstone, ME15 9BZ

**Attendees: Kent Police:** Chief Constable Alan Pughsley, Deputy Chief Constable Paul Brandon, Assistant Chief Constable Jo Shiner

**OPCC:** Ann Barnes (Police and Crime Commissioner), Adrian Harper (Chief of Staff), Sean Nolan (Chief Finance Officer)

### 1. Welcome and Introduction

The Commissioner welcomed all attendees to the Governance Board.

### 2. Notes of previous meeting and action updates

The Meeting Notes from the Governance Board on 11 November 2015 were noted as a true and accurate record and the following action updates provided:

- The OPCC to arrange for the Commissioner to visit Shepway Community Safety Unit.
  - Discharged – added to the Commissioner's forward planner.
- The Commissioner requested an offline update on Health's contribution to the CSE Partnership.
  - Discharged – update received from the Force.
- Under part B of the agenda, add 'CSE Team Progress' as a standing item.
  - Discharged – added to the agenda.

### 3. The Kent Criminal Justice System

- ACC Shiner gave an overview of the Criminal Justice System (CJS) in Kent, stating that it is overseen by the Kent Criminal Justice Board (KCJB), incorporating all stakeholders, including the Police, Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Companies.
- The Commissioner confirmed that as there are no performance targets within Kent Police it is difficult to compare performance against other agencies. However, the priority for Kent Police was to ensure victims and witnesses were at the heart of everything that is done.
- It was recognised that victims are not represented on the Kent Criminal Justice Board, and the Commissioner suggested that this may be an area worth exploring.

### **Case File Quality**

- ACC Shiner highlighted some of the reasons why quality of case files had become an issue. There had been significant movement of officers throughout the Force due to the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), which had resulted in officers being de-skilled and subsequently entering a new role where the skills required had to be redeveloped.
- It was explained that the quality of the case file facilitates more first time guilty pleas, reducing the impact on victims and witnesses.
- The Commissioner asked ACC Shiner what would happen if there was a victim who did not wish to pursue an allegation, either through their own personal judgement, or unwillingness to attend court. ACC Shiner confirmed that this would be the victim's decision, unless Kent Police had sufficient evidence and independent witness testimonies to support a prosecution.
- The Force had increased its number of Domestic Abuse Liaison Officers, in an attempt to increase the number of victims willing to give evidence. This in turn would hopefully result in a higher proportion of offenders being prosecuted for domestic abuse offences.

### **Technological Developments**

- The Commissioner stated that she had engaged with Senior Presiding Judge Lord Justice Fulford recently, and he was very complimentary about the way in which Kent Criminal Justice System is using video technology to enable vulnerable victims and witnesses to give evidence in court.
- An example was given where a vulnerable, housebound male was the victim of a distraction burglary, and the perpetrators assumed he would not be able to give evidence, resulting in a not-guilty plea. Upon realising the victim would be giving evidence, the suspects changed their plea to guilty. The victim's evidence was given via an iPad from his home address.
- ACC Shiner confirmed there had been some technical issues that Kent Police and the Kent Criminal Justice System have had to overcome. In particular, these focussed on legislation governing the use of video in court proceedings.
- The Deputy Chief Constable confirmed that Body Worn Video (BWV) was a useful tool to capture evidence at the scene, which included evidence of assault and violence, strengthening the prosecution case.

### **Kent Police Performance**

- A relocation of the Kent Police Criminal Justice Unit (CJU) to North Kent had resulted in a number of Police Staff leaving the organisation through voluntary redundancy.
- This had resulted in a number of vacancies within the unit, and necessitated a large recruitment drive. The Commissioner asked the Force why the vacancies had not been advertised, and filled sooner. The Force responded by saying that there are strict HR protocols that must be followed.
- The Commissioner asked whether it would be possible to fast track the new staff through the recruitment process, including vetting. The Force stated that this was not possible. For a number of individuals, responses from other police forces were required, which could extend the process. In addition, any form of fast tracked process had the potential to create risks associated with issues being overlooked.
- ACC Shiner stated that there was no national measure on case file quality. The current assessment of files is based upon the guilty anticipated plea (GAP) or non-guilty anticipated plea (NGAP). Kent Police is working with the CPS to ensure case files are of a standard which will facilitate a quality prosecution. In addition, from April onwards, there will be national measures, ensuring each officer submitting a case file has completed the work to the required standard.



- Within Sergeant and Inspector promotion processes, case file quality was now assessed, focussed on the applicant's ability to effectively monitor case file quality. This had created a force-wide interest in case file quality.
- There were now dedicated officers on each division to scrutinise each case file for quality and fullness. The number of officers reviewing case files on each division was dependent on the case file volume.
- The Commissioner asked whether the number of case files being sent back to the Force for further work was letting victims down. The Deputy Chief Constable explained that Kent Police was improving its working practices and uplifting all officers skills. In addition, he stated that the CPS and the court system needed to work more closely together to ensure a quality service is provided to all.
- ACC Shiner confirmed that there was no national inspection of the victim journey, which results in no national standard for victim services. The Force stated that if this was to happen, it would be a good opportunity to hold all partner agencies to account.

### **Operation DICE**

- Kent Police commenced Operation Dice to improve case file quality and timeliness. The Commissioner agreed that this was a huge investment from the Chief Officer team with regards to the level of commitment towards improving victim satisfaction and service levels within the Force.
- The first case file produced under the guidelines of Operation Dice is scheduled for hearing at court next week, which will allow the Force to request information from the CPS to ensure the objectives are being met.
- The CPS and Kent Police will continue to routinely dip sample case files from each division to ensure that they are of the standard required.

### **Positive Outcomes**

- Further examples of positive outcomes from Force technological developments were provided, such as a vulnerable victim being assisted with their finances by a neighbour, who was intentionally using their debit card to withdraw money for their own use. The victim was housebound and was unable to attend court. Evidence was given through a Samsung smart phone, with further evidence being submitted via a Force iPad in the form of bank statements, to strengthen the prosecution case.
- The Kent Police Video Exploitation Programme had reduced the time officers spend travelling to and from court, and allowed them to give evidence via video link. This had reduced the amount of time officers were being extracted from community policing.
- Recent joint working with the National Crime Agency (NCA) resulted in seven arrests for various firearms offences, including the seizure of 22 assault rifles, 9 machine pistols, 58 magazines, 2 silencers and over 1000 rounds of ammunition. The suspects did not leave police custody during the process, and were streamed into the court, live from custody. This reduced the demand for transportation and the risk to the public by eliminating the requirement to transport the offenders between custody and court.
- As of January 2016, there is 100% coverage of video enabled court rooms in both crown and magistrates courts.

### **Actions**

- **The Commissioner to write to Michael Gove regarding the prospect of a joint inspection concerning the victims' journey through the Criminal Justice System.**
- **The Force to provide an update at the next Governance Board on Operation Dice.**

#### 4. Disrupting Organised Crime Groups

- The Commissioner began the discussion by asking the Chief Constable to confirm the definition of an Organised Crime Group (OCG). The Chief Constable summarised the definition as; 'A group of individuals working with others, on a consistent basis, with the capability or intent to commit serious harm or serious crime.'  
*(National Crime Agency definition: 'Serious crime planned, coordinated and conducted by people working together on a continuing basis. Their motivation is often, but not always, financial gain.')*
- The Chief Constable reiterated the Force's vision for Local to Global, confirming that all Police Staff and Police Officers, throughout the divisions, are supplying and reacting to intelligence from a wide range of sources.
- Local Police Officers and PCSOs are now fully aware of the role they play in terms of intelligence gathering and the importance of reporting what they see. This had also extended to Police Officers and PCSOs knowing who individuals of interest are within their area.
- There are 44 established OCGs within Kent, but the Force understands that OCGs do not solely work within Force boundaries. The Commissioner asked if this number was reducing, increasing, or plateauing, with confirmation from the Chief Constable that the number of OCGs does not change dramatically.
- The Chief Constable explained the disruption scoring for OCGs and clarified that there is an OCG Scoring Panel, which works to a national scale. This panel consists of members of the Serious Crime Directorate (SCD) and members of local divisional staff.
- The Commissioner asked about the operations Kent Police conducts with partner agencies, aside from the National Crime Agency (NCA). The Chief Constable confirmed that joint operations have been completed successfully with other agencies including Trading Standards.
- The Chief Constable confirmed that the NCA has no directing powers over Kent Police officers and staff, and any work conducted by the NCA within county boundaries would be raised with the Chief Officer team beforehand.
- The Commissioner asked the Chief Constable whether he had sufficient resources. The Chief Constable responded by saying that it is a very important part of the business, and very complex. If it was not understood properly, then there was the potential for an increase in firearms and drug use within the county.
- The Commissioner asked the Chief Constable how the development of new crimes such as Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and cybercrime were being addressed by SCD. The Chief Constable confirmed the CSE team works closely with the Paedophile On-Line Investigation Team (POLIT) and regularly consults with experts within the cybercrime field.
- The Deputy Chief Constable explained that it is not always possible to get the desired result, which in most cases would be an arrest and charge. However, through partnership working, the Force is still able to significantly disrupt OCGs. An example of this would be gaining intelligence for other agencies, such as local councils to then take action against an offender.
- The Commissioner asked the Chief Constable about the income the Force receives through the Proceeds of Crime Act. The Chief Constable stated that he did not have an exact figure, but the Force aims to acquire more forfeiture than confiscation.

## 5. HMIC Value for Money Profiles (2015)

- The November 2015 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) Value for Money (VfM) Profile provides comparative data on a wide range of policing aspects, benchmarking these against the Most Similar Group (MSG) and nationally.
- In HMIC's PEEL Inspection, as well as their VfM Profile, it was evident that Kent Police continued to be run efficiently, with the Force being considered as low cost.
- It was confirmed by the Chief Constable that there had been an increased spend on training for both Police Staff Employees (PSE) and Police Officers. The most valuable Force resource was its officers and staff and there was a requirement to ensure they were sufficiently well trained.
- The Commissioner enquired about the spend on Public Order training, and whether this was suitable, and proportionate for the threat level within Kent. The Deputy Chief Constable confirmed that Kent trained officers and staff in line with the national framework, with courses being run for Commanders and Tactical Advisors as well as all ranks.
- The Commissioner agreed with this, stating that the events in Paris and events over the weekend in Dover had reinforced this. The actions of all Police Officers and PSEs who were involved were applauded.
- The increase in the Council Tax precept was discussed, with the Commissioner stating that this would fund an extra 24 officers with firearms capability, ensuring the safety of the public within Kent.
- The Chief Constable confirmed that all the income from the increase in precept would be spent on firearms officers. A timescale was given of 12 – 18 months before all officers would be fully trained and on the streets. There were varying issues with regards to recruitment, none more so than other forces also recruiting firearms officers.
- Ian Drysdale confirmed that the savings the Force was expected to make were going to have to come from back office functions, along with developments in technology. This would in turn, maintain the highest level of officers possible on the front line.

### Action

- **The Commissioner requested confirmation that the Public Order training spend was reasonable for the requirements of Kent Police.**

## Part B – Standing / Routine Update Items

### 6. Update on Child Sexual Exploitation – A Partnership Approach

- The Chief Constable confirmed that the Force, along with the OPCC, had provided funding for the CSE team for the next three years.
- Staffing within the CSE team was now complete, with the exception of Health, with assurances received that recruitment was underway.
- The Commissioner asked the Chief Constable about the PEEL Vulnerability Report which highlighted some areas for improvement (AFI). The Chief Constable said that the information within the report was now 10 months out of date, and that if a further inspection was to take place, numerous improvements would be noted.

- The Chief Constable explained that through the new CSE team, the intelligence being received was increasing its effectiveness.

#### **Working with Partners**

- It was explained that when CSE incidents are reported to the police, it is actually too late, in that the incident has occurred and an individual has already become a victim. Through close working with partners, such as schools, police are able to work with teachers, who are able to identify warning signs earlier.
- ACC Shiner sits on the Kent Safeguarding Children's Board in order to gain a more cohesive picture of the multiagency approach.
- The Commissioner asked what steps were being taken by the Force and partner agencies to protect the most vulnerable, such as asylum seekers and children in care. ACC Shiner responded by saying that there was difficulty in not 'overstepping the mark' with regards to legality and proportionality. Social workers often find it difficult to engage with such individuals as they are normally within multi-occupancy addresses. In addition, they often have little trust and faith in enforcement agencies.
- ACC Shiner explained that some individuals come from extremely traumatic backgrounds and this does not stop when they get to the UK. Some may even go missing before any agency is able to make contact with them.

#### **Action**

- **The Commissioner requested an update on how the CSE Team is addressing the risks associated with the most vulnerable, such as asylum seekers and children in care within Kent.**

### **7. Financial Monitoring and Savings update**

- It was confirmed by the Chief Constable that the Force, despite the Home Secretary's announcement, will still be required to make savings over the next four years.
- Kent Police is in a strong position, given that all funding plans have been agreed a year in advance, which was confirmed by Ian Drysdale as good housekeeping.
- The Commissioner has agreed to defer a proportion of the savings by using £5.5m of reserves. This has enabled the Force to gain more time to design, develop and implement changes necessary to achieve the required savings.
- The savings are planned to come from 'back office' functions, in addition to advancements in technology, to help maintain levels of policing on the front line.

### **8. HMIC & Related Report(s) and Performance Updates**

- The Chief Constable confirmed that HMIC reports allow Kent Police to address issues that have been objectively identified. These include the vulnerability action plan, along with case file timeliness and quality and victim code compliance.
- This ensured the Force is upholding the highest standards and performing in line with HMIC and the public's expectations.

#### **Firearms Licensing**

- A recent national HMIC inspection, of which Kent was not one of the forces inspected, produced numerous recommendations for all police forces with regards to allocation and verification of firearms licences.



- ACC Shiner stated that within Kent, there are currently; 5,283 firearm certificate holders, 21,104 shotgun certificate holders, 135 Registered Firearms Dealers Certificates, 48 Firearm Club Certificates and a total of 20,905 firearms and 50,971 shotguns. Compared to other counties, this was slightly higher than the average.
- The Commissioner asked the Chief Constable for the reasons behind the backlog within Firearms Licensing. The Chief Constable responded by saying that there was a demand, resource imbalance. However with limited resources, decisions had to be made about where they would be most effectively deployed; there was also a requirement to understand future demand.
- The Commissioner asked how the Force could be certain that the individuals being granted a firearms certificate were suitable, along with the firearms having a suitable place to be stored. The Chief Constable confirmed that all applications were followed up by a home visit.
- ACC Shiner confirmed that the system being used at the moment by the Firearms Licensing team was a national system that was not able to collate as much information as the Force would like.
- There have been some new, emerging issues received by the Firearms Licensing team, including individuals wishing to take their registered firearms to university to partake in shooting clubs. Given the requirements for secure storage, sometimes this was not possible.
- ACC Shiner disclosed that the cost of processing firearms licenses outweighed the revenue received. The cost of the licensing fee depends on the type of license and whether the application was a renewal or first time application.
- The Deputy Chief Constable confirmed that the level of firearm offences within the county of Kent had been low over the last few years.

## Action

- **The Commissioner requested a comparison between the cost of processing firearms licenses and the revenue received.**

## 9. Update on Significant Operational Matters

- The Chief Constable spoke about the events in Dover, but was mindful not to go into too much detail until the full Post Incident Review had been completed.
- It was confirmed that in order to ban a protest or march, police must have intelligence to reasonably believe there is going to be serious disorder which is regarded as being at the very serious end of violence, including widespread disorder, looting and rioting.
- The Commissioner stated that she had spoken to the people of Dover, and no one criticised the actions of Kent Police. The only complaints received were towards the protesters.
- The Chief Constable stated that PSEs and Police Officers would have access to welfare or support services they may need following the events in Dover.

Action	Status	Owner	Due date
The Commissioner to write to Michael Gove regarding the prospect of a joint inspection concerning the victims' journey through the Criminal Justice System.	Discharged	The Commissioner	05/04/2016
The Force to provide an update at the next Governance Board on Operation Dice.	Open	The Chief Constable	05/04/2016
The Commissioner requested confirmation that the Public Order training spend was reasonable for the requirements of Kent Police.	Discharged	The Chief Constable	05/04/2016
The Commissioner requested an update on how the CSE Team is addressing the risks associated with the most vulnerable, such as asylum seekers and children in care within Kent.	Discharged	The Chief Constable	05/04/2016
The Commissioner requested a comparison between the cost of processing firearms licenses and the revenue received.	Discharged	The Chief Constable	05/04/2016