

# Meeting Notes

<b>Title:</b>	Performance and Delivery Board
<b>Date &amp; time:</b>	Wednesday 15 March 2023
<b>Venue:</b>	Kent Police Headquarters, North Kent (also broadcast via Microsoft Teams Live)
<b>Attendees:</b>	<b>Office of the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Matthew Scott - Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)</li><li>Rob Phillips - Chief Finance Officer (CFO)</li></ul> <b>Kent Police:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Tim Smith - Chief Constable (CC)</li><li>Peter Ayling - Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)</li><li>Ian Drysdale - Deputy Chief Officer (DCO)</li></ul>
<b>Apologies</b>	Adrian Harper – PCC's Chief Executive

## 1. Welcome & Introduction

- The PCC welcomed the CC, DCC and DCO; he thanked them for the papers and advised they were publicly available.
- Noting it was the first meeting in their new roles, the PCC congratulated both the CC and DCC on their appointments.
- Mr Harper's apologies were noted.

## 2. Notes of Previous Meeting – 30 November 2022

- The notes were agreed as a true and accurate record and there were no matters outstanding.

## 3. Making Kent Safer Plan: Delivery & Performance

- As his first meeting in the substantive role, the CC confirmed a commitment from himself and the chief officer team to the Safer in Kent Plan and priorities within it.  
**Work with residents, communities and businesses to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour**
- With regards to My Community Voice, the CC advised the number of subscribers continued to increase. He stated the Force aspired for it to be the main tool but needed to maintain momentum so engagement did not plateau.
- November 2022 to January 2023, the CC reported nearly 3,000 less victim based crimes. He also noted an increase in solved outcomes and the charge rate which he said was a pattern across several crime categories. As to why, he advised it was something about the policing model, the increase in police numbers and the reduction in offences, some of which was the result of police activity. Overall, he said it was a positive picture around crime in the county.
- November 2022 to January 2023, the CC reported ASB decreased by 13% (764 incidents). Despite the reduction, he advised there was an increase in motor vehicle nuisance on roads, adding it mainly involved vehicles being used in an anti-social manner at 'car meets' in places like retail parks. He said it was a phenomenon linked to a few locations and the Force was doing lots of work to understand it and target it.
- Referring to previous queries about whether the reduction in ASB was due to 101 call handling challenges, he stated the Force was now confident there was no direct correlation. He advised the reduction had continued even though 101 performance had improved significantly from roughly 40% attrition in November 2022 to 15% in January 2023.
- The CC noted Best Bar None was supported by the Home Office and very much focused on safety in the night-time economy, particularly violence and sexual offences against women and girls. He said 60 premises had been assessed and reached the required standard of accreditation, with more assessments planned for 2023.
- November 2022 to January 2023, the CC reported burglary business and residential decreased by 8.7% (41 offences) and 11.5% (143 offences) respectively. He stated charges had also continued to increase.
- November 2022 to January 2023, the CC reported violent crime fell by 11.1% (2,427 offences). While there was a slight decrease in suspect interview rate, he said the charge rate had increased from 5.4% in 2021 to 7.4% in 2022.
- November 2022 to January 2023, the CC reported robbery decreased by 13.7% (43 offences), and the charge rate increased from 8.0% to 13.7%.

- The CC said he was pleased to see a robust response from the Crime Squad. With regards to the table showing rolling year totals, he advised it was not produced for every team but was helpful to show the activity generated and outcomes because they were intrinsically linked to the key crime categories of burglary residential and robbery.
- In relation to motor vehicle nuisance, the PCC advised he had received positive feedback from Dartford and Medway with regards the use of Dispersal Orders. Noting it did not just involve cars but also motorbikes, he asked about the proportion of incidents that resulted in police action and the actions taken. In terms of initial response, the CC reported around 31% were attended as immediate or high incidents – for example, where vehicles were driven dangerously and likely to cause injury. The remainder were sent to the Community Safety Units to review – for example, to engage with local businesses to determine what action could be undertaken to reduce occurrences, and from a police perspective to consider enforcement activity. The DCC commented the Force could achieve greater consistency across the Districts in terms of prevention and post event action. He also advised Safer Spring would focus on use of vehicles for anti-social purposes and he was keen to collaborate with Local Authorities to exploit all tactics.
- Noting the good results around residential burglary, the PCC requested an update on the level of attendance. Advising it was a crime type where attendance was vital in terms of victim care but also potential forensic evidence, the CC reported the proportion attended in January 2023 was over 99% and February 97%. In terms of those not attended, he said they were usually where the record had been incorrectly marked up or there was a good reason – for example, where officers were unable to gain access to the property.
- The PCC asked the CC to comment on how the Force provided victims and witnesses with feedback on things like investigations and charges, and also where people were affected by crime and ASB, but not directly involved. Highlighting the Force needed to comply with the Victims Code, the CC said it could not always give detailed information to the wider public and intended to use My Community Voice for positive messaging and to promote what it was doing. He said the Force needed to get better at promoting positive messages to improve public confidence, adding he was reassured the amount of information put out on Twitter was positive.

#### **Tackle violence against women and girls**

- In relation to Op Soteria, the CC reported the national team had visited and helped with completion of a self-assessment. He said the Force was now working on the changes needed but they cut across several partners involved in the response to rape, including the CPS.
- With regards to the VAWG Walk and Talk events, the CC advised feedback had been overwhelmingly positive for what was a simple and straightforward idea. Noting the Force intended to continue them, he said the 'so-what' coming from them was important as he was interested in how the Force could make areas safer for women and girls.
- He stated the Community Safety Partnership was strong and that choosing VAWG as the theme for their next conference was a significant step in mainstreaming it into the wider partnership.
- The CC highlighted the support of Dr Jan Storey in helping the Force to understand the psychology behind stalking behaviour. He said he hoped it would provide greater insight on how best to intervene and stop it earlier, enable officers to obtain and issue more Prevention Orders, and ultimately arrest more offenders and protect more victims.
- November 2022 to January 2023, the CC reported a decrease in rape offences of 10.8% (67 offences). He said there continued to be a strong response by the Force, adding the charge rate also continued to increase.
- Noting a similar decreasing trend in sexual offences and increase in charge rate, the CC stated that both rape and sexual offences were key priorities for the Force because the harm and impact on victims was so great.
- Congratulating the Force on receiving a letter from the Home Office advising it was achieving more Stalking Protection Orders per head of population than any other police force, the PCC asked about the length of time to secure Orders. The CC advised it largely depended on whether the Order was contested or not: on average first hearings were held within about three weeks and so it could be issued then, but if contested could be delayed by two to three months. However he said the focus of the Multi Agency Stalking Intervention Programme (MASIP), which the Force was a key part of, was to track and monitor applications and manage any risks presented by an individual. Whilst acknowledging the Force had been successful, he said it would not be complacent and wished to increase the number further.
- The PCC queried whether the Safer Streets App referenced in the paper was the same as the Home Office's Street Safe Tool. The DCC confirmed it was.

#### **Protect people from exploitation and abuse**

- November 2022 to January 2023, the CC reported a decrease in domestic abuse (DA) of 14.1% (1,311 offences) and increase in charge rate from 5.6% to 7.3%.
- With regards to stalking & harassment and coercive & controlling behaviour, the CC advised the way the Force used the risk assessment tool (DARA) had resulted in offences being recorded that should not have been; as a result there had been some adjustment in the figures.
- The CC commented DA was the one category where he would not automatically say a reduction was a good thing. He said whilst he would like less DA and harm, he never wanted to stop a victim coming forward.
- In relation to the Proactive DA Teams within VIT, the CC said work around those who caused the most harm was a success, but the Force needed to look at how it dovetailed into other areas because lots of the tactics were similar.
- The CC reported positive feedback from victims on the DA Hub and the support offered through Rapid Video Response (RVR). He said he was looking at how RVR could be maximised and potentially rolled out to other crime types, adding the Force had secured funding to do so along with partner forces in the region.

- The CC noted the Prevent and Protect Team's conference which he said was a good opportunity to share awareness and upskill other agencies and partners on the signs to look out for. He also offered to give the PCC a more detailed and bespoke presentation on their work.
- He said there had been a positive investment into the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Team which meant there was a very bespoke focus on it as a crime type.
- Noting some of the reduction in DA was due to a change in recording practices, the PCC asked if there was any understanding as to why the decrease was so large. The CC explained stalking & harassment was down about 15% and coercive & controlling behaviour about 40%, predominantly because of more accurate crime recording. He said the effect would impact the figures for some time but was being factored into the data to ensure the Force was not missing any other DA trends.
- Following a query from the PCC, the CC advised that at times for the right reasons, officers were making crime recording decisions based on risk assessment questions that actually had no veracity. He said the police response was still there: if a victim needed to be safeguarded, other offences were disclosed that needed to be recorded, or someone needed to be arrested, they were. However the change was important because by not addressing it, supervising staff would continue to receive essentially administrative reports, when they could focus on other cases.

#### **Combat organised crime and county lines**

- The CC advised staff in the Organised Crime Group Management Unit were extremely skilled and knowledgeable around the mapping and scoring process. He said it was important because it made sure OCGs in Kent were comparable to other forces and the Force received the right resources when working with regional partners.
- To underscore the level of harm caused by county lines, the CC reported that only that week a young man in Gillingham stabbed another and the motivation was drugs supply. He added it was high harm and the Force's decision to invest in specific teams recognised the devastating impact.
- The PCC commented that the sustained effort was really delivering results and asked that his thanks be passed to staff in relevant teams.
- The CC reported continued growth in fraud, not just in Kent but nationally and internationally, advising it now accounted for circa 40% of all crime in England and Wales. He said it was a constant battle to combat the ever changing tactics used to defraud people, but added the Force was in a strong position with the SCD.
- In terms of the National Policing Measures, the CC made the following comments:
  - Reducing murder and homicide offences – increase of seven against the previous 12 month period. The Force had the advantage of ACC Simon Wilson who led the national work on Homicide Prevention and would continue to monitor closely, with a focus on what more could do with partners to drive homicide rates down.
  - Reducing serious violence – the Force lacked accurate data from some partners, which whilst not a criticism, reflected the challenge of providing data for police purposes. The VRU was working hard to address the data issues, particularly from A&E and Trusts so resources were focused in the right place. He offered to give the PCC a specific briefing on combatting serious violence and the VRU.
  - Disrupting drugs supply and county lines – monitored closely by the DCC through the Force Performance Framework but was an indication of how proactive and robust the Force response around it was. The figures were good because it showed the Force was uncovering the criminality and intervening.
  - Reducing neighbourhood crime – the Force had struggled with the change in definition to residential burglary and ensuring the appropriate response where a house was burgled versus that needed where for example, tools were stolen from a shed. The Crime Squad continued to focus on robbery and burglary residential and the Neighbourhood Policing Review had the Beating Crime Plan and PCC's Safer in Kent Plan at its heart.
  - Improving victim satisfaction, with particular focus on DA victims – the Force continued to survey victims of DA, hate crime and rape, and performance remained strong. Following the PEEL inspection AFI around assessing public satisfaction, the intention was to widen the surveys significantly.
- With regards to cybercrime, the CC advised it was an area being worked on with regional colleagues in terms of the national response and the Force's part in it. Whilst his focus would always be on the public of Kent and reducing crime in the county, he said cybercrime was global and often impacted Kent residents.
- Noting the national intensification period around fraud in February, the PCC asked for an update on Force activity. The CC reported there were 12 arrests; 3 voluntary interviews; 9 warrants executed; cease and desist notices issued; 30 offences submitted to CPS; 11 charges for fraud offences; and over £200k seized.
- Noting the Force was reliant on information provided via Action Fraud and not every case was passed to forces, the PCC asked how much was triaged out. The CC advised that part of the challenge for UK Policing was that fraud was global and national coordination around it difficult. He reported only around 5-6% was directly allocated to the Force, adding that other agencies also undertook investigations in the county.

#### **Be visible and responsive to the needs of communities**

- The CC advised the Schools Team were focused on a system of triaging school based incidents and working with the VRU to roll out the Knife Pledge which was aimed at teaching children why they should not carry knives.
- Highlighting the close working relationship with schools, the CC said the Force was very alive to concerns around Schools Officers and movement of staff into the Force Control Room. He stated the commitment to Schools Officers and working with schools remained and was written large in the Neighbourhood Policing Review.
- With regards to mental health, the CC said it continued to be a positive story with the Force's commitment to helping those in crisis being unwavering, but importantly less and less incidents where it was the primary and main responder.

- The CC highlighted the improved 101 performance, noting that whilst it was difficult, the Force was in transition and doing lots of work to get to a position where there was resilience in the Force Control Room (FCR). He said the Force would get there with a combination of technology and the right number of people with the right skills, adding that police officers were currently working in the FCR and he had agreed to an extension of six months to November. He stated the Force would look carefully at where the 35 posts were taken from to spread the impact across the organisation, but advised it was normal to move resources around. He said he was confident performance had been stabilised, but his anxiety was around traditional peaks in demand. He added the response to 999 calls remained good but there was lots to delve into as the change programme continued. He said the challenge was around digital contact as the Force was not seeing huge seismic changes in terms of public engagement through them.
- Highlighting the extremely dedicated and hard working staff within the FCR, the CC advised he was seeing a member of staff that afternoon as part the Quality Service Awards. He said she was 10 days out of training and did a fantastic job speaking to a victim of a violent attack on the phone for 30 minutes who was in absolute crisis. As CC, he said his job was to ensure the FCR had the right resources so the service to the public was as good as it could be.
- Echoing the CC's tribute to the member of staff, but also acknowledging the wider FCR team, the PCC said they were working hard in challenging circumstances and doing their absolute best to provide a first class service. He also thanked the CC, his leadership team and other officers/staff for how they had responded to the challenge of improving the responsiveness of the FCR and said the results were clear to see in the data.
- The PCC asked for an update on the implementation of the Neighbourhood Policing Review. The DCC advised the 60 day business case consultation ended on Sunday 22 January and the Force had gone through the selection process for posts, with 88% of staff getting one of their top three choices and 61% their first preference. Noting the forthcoming milestones were 6 June when the Notice Period ended and the move to the new structure on 7 June, he said the next stage was focused on the transition period. He explained that for a period, although it was not known how long but assumed between 3-6 months, the Force would adopt an interim model with an optimum number of officers and a focus on the new Beat Officer function. He said whilst there were challenges around ensuring the interim model was right and did not impact on wider service delivery, he had a high level of confidence the transition would take place on 7 June, with the final model in place and up to its required staffing level towards the end of 2023.
- With regards to mental health and the reduction in section 136 detentions, the PCC commented on the excellent work in partnership with the NHS to ensure those in crisis received the right care. Noting Kent had received funding for a centralised Section 136 suite in Maidstone, he asked if it would impact on police resources or the response. The CC advised that whilst officers travelling halfway across the county was not ideal, if the proposed facility was staffed appropriately, it should reduce the occasions where two officers were spending almost their entire shift at A&E with an individual because there were no alternative places of safety. Noting there were plans for crisis houses to be introduced in 2024, he said he also wanted his staff to be able to use them to reduce travel time. Advising the continuing work to reduce the Force's response to crisis was probably more important, he said instinctively it seemed a good thing as it was not right for those in crisis to be sat in A&E for hours with two police officers.

#### **Prevent road danger and support Vision Zero**

- The CC said there was a strong Force commitment to Vision Zero and a particular focus on the four areas that had the biggest impact – speeding, substance misuse, seatbelt offences and mobile phone use.
- November 2022 to January 2023, the CC reported a reduction in road deaths of 8% (1 less fatality).
- Highlighting the Road Safety Unit's third operation of the year, the CC said it was impressive and a good example of multi-agency working.
- The CC highlighted the impressive number of hours recorded by the Special Constabulary Roads Policing Unit, which he said was a superb supplement and supported the road traffic teams out and about, day in and out.
- Noting the Force had previously committed to creating a permanent PC post to support Community Speedwatch, the PCC asked if that was still the intention as part of the Neighbourhood Policing Review. The CC confirmed it was, advising he was content the individual was needed and so there was a commitment to at least the next year.

#### **Protect young people and provide opportunities**

- Highlighting the voice of the child, the CC advised the Force was trying to get itself to the position where every single member of staff had a good understanding, and therefore the response was correct.
- He said the Force was engaged with the Office of the PCC around youth prevention commissioned services, adding that its response to child protection was very robust.
- With regards to use of powers and the letter from the Children's Commissioner requesting data on the number of children strip searched, the CC advised the Force had reviewed each occasion a search of a child had taken place where there was a need to expose intimate parts. Based on that work, he stated he was happy the Force was complying with the rules and professional practice. He said whilst it would be inappropriate to include the number of occasions in a public document, it was very low, adding he was comfortable the power was being used appropriately.
- In terms of stop and search, the CC advised it was constantly monitored with support from the Independent Advisor Group (IAG). He noted the changes from the new IAG chair were positive, adding the increased independent scrutiny around the use of powers was welcome.
- Referring to the Cadets, the CC said the Force had covered about every age range for children with different programmes. He acknowledged and thanked the PCC for his support, noting Cadets were seen at almost every major policing event in the county. The PCC acknowledged the excellent progress and congratulated those involved.

## **Actions**

- **Force: Provide a detailed and bespoke presentation on the work of the Prevent & Protect Team.**
- **Force: Provide a specific briefing around combatting serious violence and the work of the VRU.**

## **4. Inspections, Audits & Reviews**

- The DCC advised the Force was entering a busy inspection and audit period, particularly with the next round of PEEL.
- HMICFRS Publication - Inspection of Vetting, Misconduct and Misogyny in the Police Service: Kent was one of eight forces inspected. The DCC advised HMICFRS made 43 recommendations with 28 for Chief Constables, as well as five areas for improvement (AFIs). He reported the Force had already discharged 21 with full evidence and the remaining 12 would be met within the required timeframe.
- HMICFRS Publication - A report into the effectiveness of vetting and counter-corruption arrangements in Kent Police: the DCC stated whilst disappointed to be graded 'Adequate', the Force accepted the AFIs and both had progressed:
  - 1) officers being in designated posts without enhanced vetting – the DCC said due to pressure on the team it was regular practice for individual's to be risk managed, but HMICFRS commented on the number outstanding and the risk management process. He advised that of the 58 individuals identified in posts without enhanced vetting, all had now passed, and the risk management process made more robust.
  - 2) the Force should scrutinise and have regard to vetting refusals where people had protected characteristics – the DCC reported the Force now had a Scrutiny Panel that reviewed vetting refusals to ensure they were no issues of disproportionality.
- HMICFRS Publication - Digital Forensics: HMICFRS inspected eight forces and four Regional Organised Crime Units. Whilst Kent was not inspected, the DCC advised Essex was and with a collaborative SCD it was assumed similar issues would be found. In summary, he said the recommendations were being progressed by the Head of SCD, with ongoing scrutiny by himself and the DCO, adding they would be discharged within the required timeframes.
- HMICFRS Publication: Super Complaint: How the police respond to victims of sexual abuse when the victim is from an ethnic minority background and may be at risk of honour-based abuse: the DCC advised Kent was not inspected, but the report made five recommendations, with three for Chief Constables. He said the Force accepted the recommendations and would provide a response within the required timeframe.
- With regards to Firearms Licensing, the DCC reported there were a high number of license holders in the county which had caused demand pressures, particularly at peak times for renewals. Noting there were three questions required of forces by the Policing Minister, the DCC advised the Force had responded as per the information in the paper. He added that at renewal time, when there were peaks in demand, the Force regularly made use of temporary licenses, but all renewals were discharged within the period of the temporary certificate.
- The DCC advised all forces had received a Prevention of Future Death Notice from the Coroner overseeing the Plymouth shootings. He said the required return date was 3 May and the Force would easily meet that timeframe.
- The DCC reported the Force was just entering its period of continuous assessment for the next round of PEEL. He said much of the work the Force was doing through PEEL 2021/22 to monitor, improve and discharge the AFIs would now be swept up in the new PEEL process. Whilst the Force still had oversight, he said formal sign off would now be incorporated into PEEL 2022/23.
- The DCC provided an update around the Force's response to Subject Access Requests (SARs) and the associated notice received from the Information Commissioner's Office. He advised there had been acute pressure within the Public Disclosure Team as the number received had doubled in three years and there was no limit, as there was for FoI, that disqualified those exceeding a certain threshold. He said the team took a risk based approach, prioritising those pertaining to the protection of children or vulnerable adults, but the demand had caused a backlog which the ICO observed. Noting planned investment had taken place and the period for training new staff had been compressed, he reported that in December 2022 the backlog stabilised, and by March it had reduced by 12%.
- With regards to the internal auditors, RSM, the DCO reported that of the 12 planned audits, 3 had been issued, 4 were in fieldwork and 5 were yet to be done. He said there were no particular risks and work had commenced to set next year's programme.
- He said the external auditors, Ernst Young, were less frequent visitors to the Force but played an important role in closing and signing off the accounts. He reported they were completed without any adjustment and published on time.
- With regards to the outstanding AFIs being wrapped up with the new PEEL inspection, the PCC asked whether any had been signed off. The CC advised none had been formally signed off by HMICFRS, adding that was not due to a lack of progress on the Force's part but reflected their process. Commenting that HMICFRS were notoriously slow in reviewing AFIs, the CC said the Force applied the same focus through its own inspection team and captured appropriate evidence to validate completion. The CC confirmed he was confident the AFIs were still being discharged.
- The PCC requested an update on the NPCC Historical Data Wash of officers and staff. Advising the PCC was keen to participate, the DCC said along with many forces Kent had included the Office of the PCC. He reported the Force had completed the first phase which was submission of the data, and the second phase was receipt of the data wash result which the Force anticipated would arrive on 20 March. He advised every member of staff would be run through the Police National Database and this would produce lots of data which a small team would review because most of it would be information already known or where staff were victims of crime. Noting that an NPCC Return had to be submitted by 29 September, he said the Force anticipated the work would take between 12 and 16 weeks and expected to understand the results well before the deadline.

## 5. People

- In terms of the Police Uplift programme, the DCO advised Kent's targets were Year 1 = 147; Year 2 = 147; Year 3 = 195 – a total of 489 by 31 March 2023 and to reach an establishment of 4,144.9 police officers. He reported the current Force strength was 4,053.18, with an intake of 110 scheduled to start on 27 March.
- He stated technically there was a buffer as the Force's headcount including officers on Career Break, Op Magenta personnel and ERSOU was 4,109; 56 higher than the strength.
- He also noted that in July it was agreed the Force would over recruit by 43, taking the 195 target for Year 3 to 238.
- Noting there was an embargo on transfers from December through to March, he reported there were 59 transferees waiting to leave. He said 23 were likely to leave in April, 26 in May and 10 in June, with 41 going to the MPS. He added they had been incorporated into the 2023/24 recruitment plan which had been signed off by the CC.
- Commenting that it was one thing to recruit but another to retain officers, the DCO stated the Force was as active and energised around retention as it was around initial recruitment.
- With regards to representation and diversity, he said it remained a priority and started with generating applications. In terms of applications from females, Year 1 = 31.06%; Year 2 = 37.49%; and Year 3 (to date) = 39.11%. Applications from ethnic minorities, Year 1 = 8.78%; Year 2 = 8.4%; and Year 3 (to date) = 13.13%.
- The DCO reported the current application pot of 506 was healthy in terms of meeting next year's expectations.
- He advised there were currently 154 ethnic minority officers serving representing 3.62% of the workforce; and 1,440 females representing 34.62% which was the highest ever number and proportion of officers in the Force.
- The DCO advised PCSO's featured heavily in the last quarter due to the Neighbourhood Policing Review. Noting the Force started with a strength of 160 in January 2022 - 176 under the establishment - he advised the consultation concluded in January 2023. He said preference forms were received on 17 February and the Desktop Selection process took place on 22 February. He reported there were 142 individuals for 102 roles; 113 were offered roles in the new structure; 25 were unsuccessful and made redeployees with 'at risk' status giving them an opportunity to apply for internal vacancies ahead of other staff; and 4 were recommended for voluntary redundancy
- He said the Force achieved a good result in terms of individuals getting their first choice (69 or 61%), second choice (23 or 20%) and third choice (8 or 7%), adding it was better than any previous large scale re-organisation.
- In terms of absence, the DCO reported that Kent remained a strong performer nationally, albeit there was limited comparable national data presented in the Value for Money profiles. He advised there were no significant hotspots, trends or patterns of concern and that absence was reported to Chief Officers on a bi-monthly basis.
- With regards to the business change that was inevitable in any large organisation, the CC stated his focus would always be on how to progress in as compassionate way as possible for the staff affected.
- Commenting on the extraordinary work that had been required to achieve the uplift, the CC stated his own intake was 20 officers and considered large, but 141 was staggering. He highlighted the amount and sustained pressure on the Recruitment Team, Training School and Vetting in particular. Referring to the Vetting inspection, he said whilst the Inspectors observations were valid, he was convinced the Force would have been graded higher had it not been in the period of the uplift programme where Vetting was 'white hot'. He added the uplift was positive for the public as there were more police officers, but it had required a huge effort from lots of staff.
- The PCC said the Force had done exceptionally well over a sustained period; not just the three years of the uplift, but also the three years before that. He expressed his thanks to all involved for the tremendous job they had done.
- Noting a number of Trainers had left Learning and Development recently, the PCC asked what the Force was doing to mitigate the impact and support those who continued to deliver training. The DCO advised the Force could bridge the gap and had already identified 3 staff replacements, adding whilst it would prefer to have some control over leavers, there was a benefit in turnover as it brought recent operational experience into the Training School. He said whilst they were head hunted and there was nothing the Force could do to stop them leaving, it presented the Force with an opportunity to bring in people with fresher experience, although they would initially lack the experience.
- The PCC said well done and thank you to the Kent Police College team for managing the large officer intakes over recent years.

## 6. Finance

- The DCO reported the Capital Budget was £39.88m with an expected outturn of £27.4m; an underspend of £12.4m. Despite BlueLight Commercial's help around vehicles, he advised it was due to other supply chain issues including building materials and contractors.
- He said the Force would not rush to pay contractors for work that had not been completed to the expected standard, and noted the schemes that had been delivered and paid for were of a high standard and had preserved the fabric of buildings for years to come.
- Advising the money would not be lost but rolled forward and used at the point goods/services were received, the DCO said he looked forward to when Capital Budgets were for three years rather than the current one year deadline.
- With regards to the Revenue Budget, he said it was looking lightly there would be a marginal underspend at less than 1% of the Force's budget.
- The DCO advised that he and the CFO's would be recommending the underspend be transferred into the Capital Budget; this would have a positive impact on revenue owing to less borrowing being required and therefore less repayments to service the debt from revenue next year.

- He said underspends were largely around police staff headcount and officer turnover differential which was effectively the difference between the salary of a leaving officer and the new replacement. He added that whilst the Force wanted officers with energy and enthusiasm, it was of course losing operational experience.
- Pressures in year the Force had to contend with included an unfunded pay award and inflation.
- The DCO reported the Force had a strong plan for next year to meet the £7.3m of savings required, adding the figure was £14.1m but had reduced by £6.8m owing to the outcome of the Neighbourhood Policing Review. He said the Force had assumed an unfunded 2.5% pay increase but was monitoring the wider public sector debate and might need to increase that to 3.5%, which would be an extra £1m.
- He noted savings options were diminishing: the Police Uplift rules restricted the CC's options around police officer establishment; the 19% non-pay budgets had been subjected to inflation of up to 10%, with gas and electricity higher: and police staff and support functions ranked 38 out of 43 forces in terms of cost per 1,000 population. He added where the Force had been able to make economies of scale in buildings, it had done so, but the age and number restricted the opportunity in terms of energy costs.
- The DCO advised the savings plan for 2023/24 was established some months ago and the Force had a degree of confidence it would be able to balance the budget. He stated he was less confident about 2024/25 because: there was unlikely to be any sustained period of deflation to counter the increase in the cost of goods and services; demand would continue to grow in volume and breadth; and pay awards were unlikely to be funded – he said those 3 factors alone made for a strong financial headwind.
- The CC stated the Force continued to be very lean and despite some challenges, he was confident the plans in place would continue to keep it financially sound. However, he said he had a parochial feeling of a little unfairness in the funding formula as it did not seem to favour Kent. The PCC said he understood.
- The PCC thanked the DCO for the update and said he appreciated the ongoing work between the two CFOs on the savings plan and future forecast.

#### **7. Topical Issues & Update on Significant Operational Matters**

- The CC advised in light of their weekly briefings there were none specifically, adding topical matters were covered in the papers and others were of such a sensitive nature they needed to be shared in private.

In closing the PCC thanked the CC, DCC and DCO for their presentations and for answering the questions. He thanked their teams for pulling the papers together and his team for their excellent work with the technology.

	Status	Owner	Due date
Provide the PCC with a detailed and bespoke presentation on the work of the Prevent & Protect Team	Open	Force	07/06/2023
Provide the PCC with a specific briefing around combatting serious violence and the work of the VRU	Open	Force	07/06/2023

**Date of next Performance and Delivery Board: 7 June 2023**