

Meeting Notes

- Title:** Performance and Delivery Board
- Date & time:** Wednesday 2 October 2024
- Venue:** County Room, Sutton Road, Maidstone (also broadcast via Microsoft Teams Live)
- Attendees:**
- Office of the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner:**
- Matthew Scott - Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
 - Adrian Harper - Chief Executive (CE)
 - Rob Phillips - Chief Finance Officer (CFO)
- Kent Police:**
- Tim Smith - Chief Constable (CC)
 - Peter Ayling - Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)
 - Ian Drysdale - Deputy Chief Officer
- Apologies:**

1. Welcome & Introduction

- Welcoming the CC and his team, the PCC expressed his thanks for the meeting papers.

2. Notes of Previous Meeting – 12 June 2024

- The notes were agreed as a true and accurate record and the following actions discharged:
 - Force to provide a briefing on the reduction in domestic abuse - to be provided before December meeting.
 - Force to provide a briefing on Right Care Right Person progress - to be provided before December meeting.
 - Force to provide an update on the Firearms Licensing audit - to be provided before December meeting.
 - Force to provide a copy of the deep dive report on officer leavers - to be provided before December meeting.

3. Review of Terms of Reference

- Noting the Terms of Reference had been shared prior to the meeting with two minor amends highlighted via Track Changes, the PCC asked if the CC had any comments or issues he wished to raise.
- The CC stated he did not; the Terms of Reference were therefore approved with a review period of one year.

4. Making Kent Safer Plan: Delivery & Performance

- The CC advised he would not read the paper verbatim, but pick out key points from each section.
Work with residents, communities and businesses to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour
- The CC reported a continued and sustained reduction in all crime and victim based crime, and a general increase in solved rates.
- Noting a reduction in ASB over the three-month period, he thanked the PCC for his support in ensuring the Force received funding for further activity in the hotpot areas, including the cross over with serious violence.
- Referring to a number of initiatives, including great results in Tunbridge Wells that had been reported in the media, the CC said he was pleased with how the Neighbourhood Policing model was operating.
- With regards to the hotspot areas, the CC advised it was early days in terms of understanding whether the activity was having an impact, but stated the Force would provide an update in the future.
- Reporting a decrease in knife-enabled serious violence, the CC said it was something the Force focused on because of the level of harm and impact on communities.
- The CC stated the table provided a picture of the Force's focus on shoplifting and retail crime. He said shoplifting was clearly a focus for the Government and the PCC with his new Retail Crime Board; whilst there was more to do, the CC was pleased with progress and the continual increase in number of suspects interviewed.
- The CC reported sustained reductions in burglary residential and violent crime, which he said was very pleasing.

- Reporting a reduction in hate crime, the CC said the Force was not complacent and continued to address through the Community Safety Units, Neighbourhood Policing Teams and Community Liaison Officers. He added community tensions were continuously monitored, acknowledging that national and international events could impact significantly.
- Noting the increase in Community Resolutions, the PCC asked if it was across the board or linked to specific offences in line with the victims wishes? Advising it was an area raised by HMICFRS, the CC advised there had been a focus on raising awareness and training, and highlighted the Making Time Count App. Whilst pleased with the step change, he noted there was a need to ensure it was being used correctly with appropriate checks and balances. He said whatever the crime, if someone needed to be charged and put before a court they would always do so, but it offered a legitimate and appropriate outcome for those who could be rehabilitated. He added it was a helpful increase, but one the Force needed to understand going forwards, and offered to report on it again in the future.
- Congratulating the Force on the reduction in ASB, the PCC asked if the hotspot areas were seeing a greater decrease to other areas. Commenting it was too early to be sure, the CC advised there was a small difference, with the violence hotspot areas seeing a 4.7% reduction compared to 2.7%, and a 0.7% difference in the ASB hotspot areas.
- With regards to shoplifting and retail crime, the PCC noted the paper showed data for charges and suspects interviewed, and asked about the level of recorded offences. The CC reported that for the quarter it was up 0.7% (+28 offences), but said he was confident the Force's activity would start having an impact.
- Noting the criteria within the Retail Crime Action Plan, the PCC asked about the percentage of incidents attended and whether it was normally a police officer. The CC advised the Force attended all incidents according to Threat, Risk and Harm, with those where violence was used, an offender was still present, the shopkeeper was in fear, or evidence needed to be secured quickly receiving immediate attendance. If none of those were evident, it may be dealt with in a different way or as non-urgent. He said he was comfortable and happy with attendance based on risk, but there was a need to focus on overall performance.
- Noting Burglary Residential was showing good performance, the PCC asked for an update on the charged and solved rate. The CC reported the charged rate for the year was 10.5% compared with 7.7% last year, a 2.8 percentage point increase. The PCC said he was pleased to see it moving in the right direction.
- With regards to nuisance motor bikes, the CE said it was pleasing to see that six off-road bikes had been seized. He asked whether the Force updated complainants, and also queried what had happened to bikes that were seized. Advising that bikes were either destroyed or sold for the Police Property Fund, the CC also confirmed that the Force promoted the results and provided updates to complainants, although sometimes this was limited. He said the proof was in the feedback received from the public.

Tackle violence against women and girls

- The CC advised it was an area of focus for the Force and part of its Control Strategy.
- Reporting a good reduction in rape and serious sexual offences, the CC advised there was a focus on compliance with the Op Soteria Plan. He also reported an increase in the charged rate for the financial year to 15.8%, adding it was at 4.3% in May 2022 when the Improvement Plan and the Op Soteria work first commenced.
- In terms of DA, the CC advised the Force was an early adopter of the DARA system and the paper included some examples of how it was working with partners, including the Office of PCC, to continue improving the response.
- The CC advised there continued to be a robust response to Stalking and Harassment, including use of multi-agency panels. With 167 Stalking Prevention Orders, he said Kent was one of the highest performing forces in the country, adding the Divisional Policing Review (DPR) would see the creation of a High Risk Investigation Team which he hoped would enhance the response further.
- Noting the increase in the rape and sexual offences charged rate, the PCC asked if the Force had now implemented all the Op Soteria best practice and if the CC was comfortable with progress? The CC stated he was comfortable with progress and the Force had adopted the full model. He said the final piece of the puzzle would be when the DPR went live on 14 October because it would see the establishment of a central rape and DA team, and full compliance with the Op Soteria plan. He added his focus was on its sustainability and whether it resulted in a step change in performance.
- The PCC requested an update on recorded offences of both stalking and harassment compared to last year. The CC advised there had been a small decrease in stalking offences, with 1,075 compared to 1,081 in the same period last year. In terms of harassment, he reported 2,748 offences this year compared to 2,331, an 18% increase.
- The PCC asked if the Force understood the reasons for the small increase in sexual offences; for example, was it due to the reporting of recent or non-recent offences? The CC advised it was not related to a large increase in non-recent offences, but to three new offences introduced in January 2024 which related to the sharing of pictures or video of someone in an intimate state without their consent, with the intention of causing harassment, alarm and distress and for the purpose of sexual gratification.

Protect people from exploitation and abuse

- The CC reported a 12% decrease in DA offences (962 less crimes), and a slight decrease in both the charged rate and solved rate. He said the solved rate remained a key risk on the Performance Committee agenda.
- The CC reported a reduction in Adult Protection and VAP compared to last year.
- With regards to exploitation, the CC said the examples in the paper showed some of the Force's great activity. He said it was a real focus for the Serious Crime Directorate.
- Advising he would not be making any specific reference to fraud, the CC noted it was an area the PCC had received detailed briefings on in the past.

- Noting the decrease in DA, the PCC asked if the Force understood the reasons – for example was it a reduction in victims reporting for the first time, or repeat victims? The CC advised the repeat victim rate was 2% lower than last year based on the Home Office definition (someone who had been the victim of the same crime more than once in the last 12 month period). Whilst the Force understood some of the reasons, he said it needed to do more to understand it fully. He added that as a category, it was a key focus because of the harm associated with repeat DA.
- Highlighting the exploitation example in the paper, the PCC said it was a fantastic investigation and excellent result.

Combat organised crime and county lines

- Noting data in the paper showed performance up to June, the CC stated live OCG's and disruptions continued at healthy levels. He added the examples also showed activity that had resulted in arrests, and the seizure of significant amounts of drugs, cash and firearms.
- Referring to the table showing Qtr 1 2024/25 compared to 2023/24, the CC highlighted the increase in Class B seizures, adding the results showed the benefits of the Serious and Organised Crime Team and investment in SCD.
- The CC said there had been a sustained response to County Lines over many years which he was convinced had made the Force increasingly resilient. Referring to the paper, he commented that he was particularly impressed with the number of warrants executed. He advised that based on intelligence, it was known that some county lines and crime groups were considering whether to continue operating in the county such was the level of activity.
- The CC noted that work continued through the VRU and other teams to offer a lifeline to those young people who were often in crisis, very vulnerable, and may be pulled into criminality.
- Commenting it was pleasing to see how relentless the Force was, the PCC sought clarity on the term 'OCG disruption'. Advising he did not wish to get into the technical definition, the CC said there were effectively minor and major disruptions, with the former being activity that impacted at the lower end, and the latter being an arrest that completely disabled a group. He said there was a national system and rigour around it, with checks undertaken by colleagues in the regional Organised Crime Unit, adding he was confident the data reflected the Force's activity.
- Referring to the Dover example in the paper, the CE commented it was great to see the Force dealing with the drugs, but also heartening to see policing protecting the most vulnerable, as seven children were taken into police protection. Thanking the CE, the CC stated Child Centred Policing was on the Force's Control Strategy and he was not sure 10 or 20 years ago the children would have been protected. He added it evidenced how officers were now thinking about the vulnerable in their everyday activities.

Be visible and responsive to the needs of communities

- Noting RCRP went live in April, the CC said the data and text in the paper showed good progress in terms of a reduction in concern for welfare calls, those the Force respond to, and the number of detentions. The CC noted the Force would never remove its commitment completely because those in crisis or in danger of serious harm, would always need to be responded to. Whilst not there yet, the CC commented that following good work with the Integrated Care Board and partners, the Force was moving in the right direction in terms of a reduction in unnecessary demand.
- The CC highlighted the superb work of Special Sergeant Opaleye and the national honour he had been awarded. He said it was good for the Force, but great for Special Sergeant Opaleye and his family in recognition of his tremendous work over many years.
- Referring to the update on Volunteers Week, the CC said the level of volunteering across the Force continued to be extremely healthy and diverse. He also highlighted the Police Cadet programme and the amount of support they provided to communities across Kent.
- Referring to the data on Force Crime and Incident Response, the CC said it evidenced an extremely positive position in terms performance, and response to the public which he was determined to maintain. Whilst never complacent, he advised he was growing in confidence it could be sustained, as it had been throughout 2024. He added that nationally, the Force was also in an extremely good position.
- The PCC stated it was astonishing performance, with the officers and staff in the Control Room doing a magnificent job. Noting call handling performance was one of the first conversations when the CC was appointed, he said he was very pleased the improvements had been delivered, adding it was also reflected in the feedback he received – it was now 'I phoned 101 and got through', as opposed to 'I phoned 101 and gave up'.
- The PCC also congratulated Special Sergeant Opaleye on his award, adding that he had met him a couple of times, and he was absolutely phenomenal like most of the Special Constables.
- With regards to RCRP, the PCC noted the paper referenced work surrounding transportation and asked for further information. Noting it had been partially delivered with September seeing an extension to the service, the CC said he hoped the next step would see police completely removed from transport issues. Noting it was work between the Integrated Care Board and Mental Health Conveyance Service, he hoped the new service would reduce the need for officers to stay in Emergency Departments for prolonged periods with those suffering a mental health crisis.

Prevent road danger and support Vision Zero

- Advising the table in the paper gave an indication of the Force's activity, the CC said it was a healthy position on the 'fatal four' which were part of the Force's Control Strategy.
- Highlighting the work of the SCIU, the CC advised they were a highly professional unit whose work was often very traumatic. In the most recent period, he said they had dealt with some really difficult incidents, including one involving a school bus where a lot of children were injured.
- Noting the Force analysed KSI data to try and understand levels and what other reduction opportunities there might be, the CC added that the Kent and Medway Safer Roads Partnership provided significant support in delivery.

- With regards to the Special Constabulary Roads Policing Unit, the CC said it added an extra layer of resource and support to other countywide activity.
- Thanking the Force for supporting the Kent and Medway Safer Roads Partnership, the PCC said it had made a big difference, with partners feeling the benefit of Kent Police being fully engaged in the Tactical Groups. The CC said the Force was keen to be an active partner because ultimately there was a shared goal of reducing KSIs in the county.
- **Protect young people and provide opportunities**
- Reporting a reduction in child protection of 2.1% (260 less incidents) for the rolling 12 month period, the CC advised it was not a HO offence type, but an investigation marker applied when officers identified a child protection issue.
- Highlighting the work of the Special Constabulary and Police Cadets, the CC drew attention to the Senior Cadet Programme for which there was a waiting list of hundreds. Commenting it was a nice problem and the result of having an extremely vibrant cadet programme, he advised he wanted to be able to make those on the waiting list an offer, but there were issues around how it could be resourced, supported and sustained which needed to be looked at.
- The PCC said the Force's support for the Cadet Programme had been amazing, but it was starting to run out of age groups to target. With regards to those cadets that subsequently looked to join the Force, the PCC asked if there was any evidence to suggest they were more successful than the general public in their applications? The CC advised there was no specific dataset within the recruitment process that could definitively show that, since recruits were not formally ask if they were previously a cadet. However, he said dip checking had shown there was a slightly higher success rate for ex-police cadets than non ex-police cadets, but he was not confident the data supported the premise.

Actions

- **Force: Provide an update on the impact of the ASB/serious violence hotspots in the future.**
- **Force: Provide an update on Community Resolutions at a future meeting.**

5. Inspections, Audits & Reviews

- vetting and anti-corruption part 2 – how effective is the National Crime Agency at dealing with corruption? The DCC said he was confident extensive work undertaken in respect of driving up standards and combatting corruption rendered the Force compliant with the one recommendation for CCs.
- State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2023. The DCC highlighted the key headlines of vetting, rooting out corruption, investment in neighbourhood policing, addressing VAWG, and an emphasis on getting the basics right. He advised it was validation in respect of the work being undertaken to deliver the DPR in line with the CC's Pledge.
- Update on PEEL 2023/25 – An Inspection of Kent Police. Advising good progress continued, the DCC noted full compliance in some areas, such as the Victims Service Assessment, was reliant on national guidance and changes to Force systems. With regards to the Areas for Improvement (AFIs), he provided the following updates:
 - Responding to the Public – he said it was uncommon for AFIs to be signed off mid-year, but significant progress in three areas - answering emergency calls, reducing the number of non-emergency calls abandoned, and giving appropriate advice to callers - had allowed HMICFRS to do so. He commented the Team's effort had been staggering, with the Force now also performing exceptionally well in comparison to others around the country.
 - Managing Offenders and Suspects – noting good progress around the risk management of dangerous and predatory offenders, he advised the DPR included a new central command for those functions which he was confident would allow the AFI to be discharged.
 - Tackling Workforce Corruption – advising improvements in vetting had been sustained, he stated the Force remained in a strong position.
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks. Acknowledging the PCC's justified scrutiny, the DCC said it was a challenge for many forces, but there was an encouraging trajectory of improvement, with a reduction in the backlogs compared to May 2023. Advising there was a slight increase the previous month due to typical seasonal demand, he said there had been an enhancement to the DBS structure that had been approved at no cost.
- With regards to Internal Audit, the DCC outlined the progress and risk levels.
- The PCC noted that under 'Managing Offenders and Suspects', the paper stated 'legacy mobile phone work was now clear', and asked if this meant cases were now progressing more quickly? The DCC noted there were ongoing challenges with regard to digital forensics and volumes of work, commenting that all forces were struggling. He said the legacy phone work had been completed with marginal improvements in processing times and associated investigative benefits, but there remained challenges. Acknowledging the Crown Prosecution Service and courts had expressed concern about the delays, he advised it was a performance priority and an action had been raised in the last Performance Committee to see what could be done to bring about improvements.
- While pleased the DBS checks backlog was decreasing, the PCC referenced correspondence received by his office concerning requests exceeding 60 days, and asked what action was being taken to manage expectations. Noting there was a service available Mon - Fri between 09:00 – 13:00 hours, through which individuals could obtain progress updates, the DCC added that outside those hours an automated message provided advice and other contact options. Where there were more complex issues relating to specific safeguarding roles, the DCC advised a dedicated case worker would make contact and provide weekly updates. The DCC said the Force was looking into further enhancements that could be made to the process.

6. People

- The DCO highlighted the end of year establishment figures and those relating to future recruitment plans, including the various entry routes.
- From the overall number of applications received, he reported 13% were from minority ethnic minority candidates and 37% female. In both respects, he advised the numbers were reasonably stable.
- He said the entry route, Investigate First, continued to receive a good number of female candidates compared to other routes, albeit slightly less than previous years.
- With regards to overall Force representation, he reported there were 157 ethnic minority officers (3.8%), and 1,448 female officers (35.2%). He added that at 35.2%, the current proportion of female officers was the highest on record.
- Despite national challenges, the DCO reported activity against the Police Race Action Plan continued at pace. He said the Force approach had been enhanced, with ACO Leicester being the lead for internal issues and ACC Harman the lead for external issues (e.g. stop and search, use of force). He added following a recent visit, the Chair of the Black Police Association was complimentary about the Force and provided positive feedback.
- Noting the officer recruitment plan was based on a projection of 27 fte leavers per month, the DCO reported that for the period April to July 2024, the average was 27.5 fte.
- April to July 2024 there were 76 officer resignations, of which, 58 (76.3%) had less than five years' service. The DCO advised this was slightly above the national figure of 72.1%, but not worryingly so and was being monitored. Reasons for leaving included career change, better opportunities elsewhere, job impact on personal life and unhappy at work.
- Highlighting the retention activity outlined in the paper, the DCO said it was important to recognise policing was a unique job, and while the Force aimed to provide new recruits with a sound understanding of the role, ultimately it would not be suitable for all.
- Reporting PCSO strength was 78.17 fte, the DCO added 22 candidates were at the pre-employment phase with an anticipated start date of November.
- April to July 2024, the DCO reported the average days lost per officer was 2.74, higher than the previous seven years but only a marginal increase on the previous year. The average days lost per member of staff (including PCSOs) was 3.15, higher than the previous eight years. Advising there was vigilance around absence, he said it was assessed by location and team, with supportive interventions made where appropriate. He added psychological and respiratory related absences continued to account for the highest proportion of lost hours.
- The DCO highlighted the comprehensive narrative on the Force's approach to Health and Safety, including the CC's obligations as an employer under the Act. Advising there was a robust policy in place that covered different roles, responsibilities and functions, he added Health and Safety and staff wellbeing were agenda items at the CC's weekly operational briefing. He stated the Force's approach to risk management and observed risks was to eliminate, modify or replace with a safe system of work, and to learn from near miss information. Noting it was not possible to eradicate all risks within policing, he said the training and equipment mitigated many, and the Force was grateful to the PCC for his support in funding a number of initiatives.
- Noting a reduction in the number of females applying for the Investigate First programme, the PCC asked if they were applying via other entry programmes instead. Confirming the overall number of female candidates was being maintained, the DCO advised there had been a recent preference for the Degree Holder Entry Programme and the Degree in Professional Policing route.
- With regards to police staff, the PCC said there was normally a high level of diversity and asked if this remained the case? The DCO advised that generally two-thirds of police staff were female, and that it was currently circa 68%.
- The PCC asked if there was comparative monitoring of police staff leaving the organisation to that of officers? Confirming there was with resignations low at 3.82%, the DCO said it was indicative of organisational well-being, and positive in terms of retaining experience.

7. Finance

- The DCO advised the current revenue position was pleasing, but noted many things could impact before the end of March 2025.
- Referring to the variances shown in the paper, he said they countered one and another in terms of risks and opportunities, and what may or may not happen, but were superbly managed by the CFOs and others.
- The DCO noted the police staff vacancy factor was a big part of the Savings Plan and set at 12% for most departments. However, because it was natural attrition, rather than enforced, he said it was difficult to achieve and therefore alternatives would need to be considered.
- In terms of dogs, he explained there was national activity around drawing down funding for the costs associated with the XL Bully legislation, but this had not yet happened.
- He reported the capital budget was expected to underspend by £5.8 million, but this was lower than experienced previously. Advising this was due to the Force not paying for goods/services that had not been received, he said the money would roll-over but could not be used for alternative spends.
- He said the PCC was familiar with the major ongoing financial risks relating to pay uncertainty, the European Entry/Exit Scheme and charges that fell out of financial borrowing.

- Noting one of the Police and Crime Plan priorities was to 'Secure the funding that Kent needs through specific grants and the Funding Formula review', the PCC queried how the Force was helping to ensure it had the funding it needed and making the case for additional investment. The DCO stated the Force was doing everything it could to assist the PCC, including working closely with his CFO. Highlighting the negative implications of the current Funding Formula, he said it was devised in 2006 and so was out of date and failed to take account of unique factors relevant to Kent. Highlighting the Force had made £93 million in savings since 2014, he said it also had a current savings target of £7.3 million, but would balance the books. In terms of the Value for Money Profiles, he reported the Force was in the lower quartile for efficiencies and had more officers per 1,000 population than most forces. He also commented that the auditor's opinion was always positive and the support arrangements inspected under PEEL found to be 'Good'. Noting a recent assessment of resilience and risk was positive, he advised there was ongoing work in respect of the uniqueness of Kent and why it deserved to be considered for special financial consideration. Advising the CC had a good working relationship with the NPCC Finance Committee Chair, he said this presented a good opportunity to ensure a sound understanding. He added the Force was grateful for the PCC's liaison with decision makers in government which would hopefully result in the Funding Formula being reviewed.

8. Topical issues & Update on Significant Operational Matters

- With regards to the Super Complaint submitted by The Suzy Lamplugh Trust on behalf of the National Stalking Consortium, the DCC advised there were 29 recommendations in total, with 12 for CCs, two for CCs and PCCs, and one for just PCCs.
- Whilst the Force was not involved in the fieldwork, he said it did respond to the supplementary national survey.
- Noting the Force had been unable to provide Interim Stalking Protection Order figures, the DCC explained that as with all forces, there were gaps in some datasets due to system limitations and manual collection being too onerous. Although it had not caused concern, he advised the decision had been taken at the Future Improvement Board to provide the data in future submissions.
- Advising there was positive commentary regarding the Force's use of risk assessment tools, the DCC stated there was also strong governance and performance, including: strategic leads specialising in DA and stalking; monthly Multi-agency Stalking Intervention Panels; a quarterly Stalking Steering Group; monthly scrutiny panel; and implementation of the DPR.
- Whilst most deadlines were March 2025, the DCC advised Force compliance based on an early assessment was good.
- Confirming the response to the PCC recommendations was being co-ordinated by the Association of PCCs, the PCC said similar to the Force, his office was a front-runner in respect of its approach to stalking, so would be in a good position to respond.
- With regards to the issue of prison capacity and early release of prisoners, the CC advised:
 - The NPCC had stood up an overarching plan called Op Drakeful to support all forces in managing the expectations, impact and responsibilities linked to the release of prisoners.
 - The Force was making custody cells available for housing prisoners, but there had been limited take up.
 - Most of the tension and pressure was in the North-West of the country, rather than the South-East.
- The PCC said he was grateful for the updates.

In closing, the PCC thanked the CC and DCC for the reports and their teams for producing them. He also thanked his team for their support with the technology.

	Status	Owner	Due date
Provide an update on the impact of the ASB/serious violence hotspots	Open	Force	11/12/2024
Provide an update on Community Resolutions	Open	Force	11/12/2024

Date of next Performance and Delivery Board: 11 December 2024