



Governance and Scrutiny Board – 13 August 2024 13:00-15:00

Venue: Gordano Room, Police HQ and Microsoft Teams

Attendees:

Clare Moody, Police and Crime Commissioner

Sarah Crew, Chief Constable (CC)

Jon Reilly, Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)

Jon Cummins, Assistant Chief Constable (ACC)

Nick Adams, ASP Chief Finance Officer

Alice Ripley, OPCC Chief of Staff

Paul Butler OPCC Chief Finance Officer

Sally Fox OPCC Director of Performance and Accountability

Ben Valentine, OPCC Senior Performance and Governance Manager

James Davis, ASP Portfolio Delivery Manager

Liz Parr, PA to OPCC Chief of Staff and Chief Finance Officer (Minutes)

Partial meeting attendance:

George Headley, ASP Force Duty Officer

Hannah Watts, ASP Head of Business Services

Deb Congram, ASP Deputy Head of Performance and Insight

Claire McFadden, ASP Deputy Head of Performance and Assurance

GOVERNANCE

1 Apologies

None received.

2 Minutes and Action Updates

The minutes of the Governance and Scrutiny Board held on 17 July were agreed as an accurate record for publication.

The Board had received updates to close several of the actions due for an update at the August Board.

The remaining actions that were due for an update at the August Board were discussed and further updates were requested in relation to the following:

- Action 69/23 – The telephony service continues to be proactively monitored with very few issues reported of a similar nature to those previously, however, there

were several short duration interruptions during w/c 5 August. These are under investigation with the supplier and IT colleagues. The infrastructure work referenced in the previous update resulted in a more general network issue on 11 July impacting much of the force, albeit less so the telephony provision. Following review, a number of steps have been taken since to resolve or restore the position. Two activities to address resilience and hardware updating are currently under discussion with network infrastructure providers as additional assurances are sought. The service enhancements planned for w/c 12 August are deferred due to a combination of supplier staff sickness, leave commitments and the IT change freeze imposed to support Op Hour. This will be rescheduled within a week or two, once these constraints are addressed. Further follow up required and will be brought back to the next GSB Board in September.

- Action 78/23 – It will be several weeks before work on the new ASB Dashboard will be progressed. A further follow up is required and will be brought back to the next GSB Board in September.
- Action 030/24 – HMICFRS Recommendations and AFIs 17 July 2024. The PCC will attend a Quarterly Homicide Prevention Review Governance meeting. Invite to follow from MCIT. Close action once the meeting date has been confirmed.

3 Finance

a) Q1 Financial Performance Report

The Quarter 1 2024/25 Financial Performance Report was presented to the Board in a new format and this format will continue to be refined. The Draft Accounts pre-date the recent disorder and its financial implications. A forecast on the recent costs incurred over the last two weeks to Police the disorder is estimated to be approx. £385k. A letter has been received from the Home Secretary regarding the National response to the recent disorder and the financial support that the Home Office will make available to all Forces.

The costs are being collated for the additional resource incurred in the last two weeks, notwithstanding the recovery costs which will include investigations, community reassurance and the additional resource required to stand up again in the future as deemed necessary. As of Monday 12 August and due to a reduction in events more recently a return to normal service has resumed with plans to stand up again for any known planned events in the future. Costs of £20m nationally across all Forces are expected.

If any requests are received for business loss or compensation then the Force will notify the Home Office. Avon and Somerset fortunately did not have the level of looting/damage/fire that some other Force areas experienced.

It was noted that the police officer pay award of 4.75% from September had been agreed and that this was higher than the 3% pay award that had been projected. The Home Office have committed to fund £175m across all Forces for any shortfall. However, we do not yet know the amount that will be distributed to Avon and Somerset.

The police staff pay award has not yet been confirmed, and it is not clear if the additional funding from the Home Office will cover both officer and staff pay awards or if there will be a separate process and communication for staff pay awards. The budget and report were produced before the pay award announcement.

The Board discussed the savings that had been achieved in Q1 which were confirmed at £553k to end of Q1, leaving a balance of savings to be achieved of £674k by the end of the financial year and feedback will continue on the original budget. The kennel costs are notably over-budget. This is largely due to the banning of XL Bully dogs and this impact is being seen across policing nationally.

4 Portfolio Highlight Report

The PCC requested an explanation of the project RAG rating. It was explained that RAID logs (risks, assumptions/actions, issues and dependencies/decisions) are produced for each project and these feed into the overarching RAG status, but that this level of detail has not been made available to the GSB.

5 Decisions/Business Cases

a) Final Business Case – First Point of Contact

The Board discussed the business case which proposed changes to staffing and structure in the Control Room. The changes proposed would achieve savings of approximately £880k. The business case balanced performance considerations against ASP's need to make savings. Noting that ASP savings will need to primarily be achieved through reductions in police staff roles and that the Control room is one of the largest police staff departments.

While the rationale behind the business case was acknowledged the PCC was concerned about the impact on call handling performance and that the proposed savings were based on predictions of demand and the benefits of future technology both of which were uncertain. On this basis the PCC agreed to the changes in structure and increases in the proposed establishment while reserving the right to make a decision on future decreases in establishment based on an assessment of demand and technology at that time.

This will have an impact on the MTFP and savings would have to be found from elsewhere. As part of the MTFP process this will be brought back to GSB at a later date and after a check in at the next Portfolio Steering Board in September.

b) Outline Business Case – Yeovil Horsey Lane

The Board were asked to review the Outline Business Case to proceed to procurement for a substantial refurbishment of the Constabulary's freehold property at Horsey Lane in Yeovil. The investment will create a modern and future-proofed police hub for the constabulary to deliver policing services in Yeovil and across East Somerset, and the public they serve.

The Board discussed the Outline Business Case which recommended option 3; an enhanced investment in the building at a total cost of £9.4m-£11.3m.

The design is a combination of both design standards and comparisons to other police stations across Avon and Somerset. It also takes into account the current configuration and responses to a consultation with the people who will work there.

The additional risks associated with a refurbishment which has quite broad costs rather than a flat site and new build have been accounted for and a complex comparison undertaken to find the right solution whilst re balancing the investment.

The next stage, stage 2, will provide more detailed design and costs and the Estates Team plan for sustainability and to refurbish where it is appropriate to do so.

There is a possibility of an increase in the project costs due to inflationary price increases and some reassurance has been sought on the potential maximum increases. Some of the scope will be changed due to the infrastructure requirements to support operations and costs consultants and colleagues are working on this and will continue to look for any opportunities on cost efficiencies.

There are no concerns for the existing capital plan and slippage has been planned for. The new EV fleet costs and the scale of the project have had positive recognition from the Government.

The Board approved the Outline Business Case Option 3 as recommended in support of proceeding to procurement for the refurbishment of the Constabulary freehold property at Horsey Lane in Yeovil.

c) Outline Business Case – Yeovil Horsey Lane Vehicle Workshop

The Board were asked to consider the Outline Business Case (OBC) to proceed to procurement for the provision of a Vehicle Workshop at Yeovil Horsey Lane complementing the parent project of Yeovil Horsey Lane Refurbishment.

It was confirmed that the transition to electric vehicles (EVs) had been taken into account in the plans, for example the installation of equipment that will service EVs. It was also confirmed that the plans take into consideration the mix of skills that will be needed and the training to be undertaken for EV.

The Board approved the Outline Business Case.

SCRUTINY

6 Chief Constable's Update

The Chief Constable stated how impressed and proud she was of how the organisation had stepped up during the last few weeks and that this has created a renewed sense of organisational purpose. Public confidence seems to be shifting positively and has enhanced police and community relationships, particularly with some communities the police have not usually been successful in engaging with. Criminal Justice partners will take this away and harness for use to take forward.

It has been busy; both with the increased operational demand over the summer period and the work related to the HMICFRS PEEL inspection. The temporary move to 12 hour shifts for officers had enabled them to get on top of backlogs.

There were some good decisions made at the recent Strategic Planning Meeting and the Chief Officer Group will bring to the fore 'Fairness' for example with regards to Institutionalised Racism and Institutionalised Equalities.

The Chief Constable had already given the PCC feedback on the draft Police and Crime Plan ahead of publication for consultation. While acknowledging the overlap between the

first three priorities she was supportive of prevention as a standalone priority which highlights the role for other organisations to help address the root causes of the problems.

The PCC recognised that the Constabulary had responded well to the violent disorder and that the communication and response had rightly received positive recognition in the building and rebuilding of trust and confidence with some communities.

7 Key Organisational Risks and Issues

- **Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) into Serious Youth Violence in Somerset**

The Constabulary has responded to addressing the findings from the JTAI to ensure that any changes and improvements are for the benefit of the whole of Avon & Somerset and are the joint responsibility across Partners.

The Somerset Partnership Board is responsible for the joint action plan and Constabulary actions will be reviewed by the Confidence and Legitimacy Committee.

Somerset operate differently from the other LAs in A&S, and there has been learning which can be shared with other areas; this is part of Change Programme 2 – Protecting the vulnerable.

The Chief is working with the Lead Safeguarding Partner. South Gloucestershire's Safeguarding Partnership have just received a 'Good' OFSTED and the specifics about what those requirements were will be considered.

Child safeguarding arrangements and how these work with the Violence Reduction Partnership are critical in Prevention, which is one of the PCC's priorities in the draft Police and Crime Plan. The consultation on the draft Plan is asking people *how* they think these priorities can be achieved.

- **Stalking & Harassment**

The Board discussed the increases in recorded stalking and harassment cases and the response to this.

The reasons for the increases are thought to be:

- Changes to counting rules since January 2023 where Stalking and Harassment is now the primary principal offence.
- Better identification and recording of harassment crimes in the context of ASB.
- Improved ways of working in the Control Room and Incident Assessment Unit which have also supported better identification and recording of these crimes.

The Constabulary are working to improve their investigative standards more broadly and with a perpetrator focus. The response to these offences should also improve as a result of the work on violence against women and girls.

- **Public disorder**

It was acknowledged that some of the issues had been discussed earlier in the meeting so this focussed on resources and staff welfare.

The Constabulary had to implement 12-hour shifts in order to cope with the increased demand. These longer shifts were stood down from 13-16 August with a plan to return to normal shift patterns from 19 August (dependent on events).

The impact of 12-hour shifts has been positive and officers have stepped up, but are obviously tired. Some resource has been protected to ensure that there is capacity for suspects to be charged and taken to court.

The Constabulary have received more mutual aid than they have provided to other police services: this was primarily to support in Bristol.

Thank you to the Gold Group lead and the outstanding job that they have carried out.

8 Performance against Police and Crime Plan:

a) Integrated Performance and Quality Report

Significant progress has been made on the current status of the AFIs specifically for Responding to the Public, Managing Offenders and Protecting the Vulnerable.

Staffing with the Internet Child Abuse Team (ICAT) has been challenging. Demand is also unpredictable as referrals are made by the National Crime Agency, for example, cases were reduced by 27 but then 48 new cases came in. There is a lot of performance information and overall the backlogs should be reducing.

Overdue visits of Registered Sex Offenders have been reduced to 13% from 20%. The Constabulary are also working towards being fully compliant with Authorised Professional Practice. Additional staffing has had to be moved into offender management to improve this performance.

Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme backlogs have also been reduced, by nearly two-thirds.

The Constabulary were inspected in relation to Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) earlier in the year: a hot debrief in March identified some areas for improvement. The Chief confirmed that good progress had been made since then including a new tasking process to respond to SOC.

b) Assurance Report – Response for Calls to Service

The Board discussed the resourcing of PCs in Patrol and agreed to discuss further the staffing challenges in the Incident Assessment Unit and Detainee Investigation Team outside of the meeting due to time constraints.

9 A.O.B

Items for Publication

Q1 Financial Performance Report

Decision notices for the 3 business cases at Item 5

Date of the next Governance and Scrutiny Board: 16 September 2024 11:30 - 13:00 and 13:30 - 15:00