



Governance and Scrutiny Board agenda – 12 November 2024 11:30-13:00 and 13:30-15:00

Venue: Gordano Room, Police HQ and Microsoft Teams

Attendees:

Clare Moody, Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
Sarah Crew, Chief Constable (CC)
Jon Reilly, Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)
Alice Ripley, OPCC Chief of Staff
Ben Valentine, OPCC Senior Performance and Governance Manager
James Davis, ASP Portfolio Delivery Manager
Vicky Ellis, Secretariat Manager (Minutes)

Partial meeting attendance:

Nick Adams, ASP Chief Finance Officer
Louise Hutchison, Chief Officer – People and Organisational Development
Helen Cripps, Improvement Consultant
Jason Shears, Superintendent, Supporting Head of Performance and Assurance
Jon Dowe, Head of Performance and Insight
Kristina Windsor, Detective Superintendent for Vulnerability

1 Apologies

Will White, Assistant Chief Constable (ACC)
Paul Butler, OPCC Chief Finance Officer (CFO)
Sally Fox, OPCC Director of Performance and Accountability

2 Minutes and Action Updates

The Minutes of the Governance and Scrutiny Board 15 October were agreed as an accurate record for publication.

The Board had received updates to close several of the actions due.

The remaining actions due for an update at the November Board were discussed:

- Action 69/23 – A statement of works on the network in relation to the issues with the telephony system had been completed by supplier. ASP are reviewing the network architecture review to identify the root cause of the issue and to check the fall-back mechanisms are in place appropriately. Urgent vetting is being undertaken to allow contractors to come on site to remedy the matters identified. There are alternative

solutions in place if the lines go down. The issues have stabilised significantly with two issues a day at most, some of these are external call drops due to the callers network and not an issue ASP can address. The most recent significant issue was national and work is underway to understand the root of the issues there. The Gold group continues to meet and the PCC's representative continues to attend.

- Action 039/24 – the breakdown of officer overtime had been received and the police staff breakdown of overtime costs would be provided.
- Action 43/245 – the assurance report on PCDA and DHEP retention was in progress and would be discussed at the December Board.
- Action 44/24 – an update was provided on the Police Perpetrated Domestic Abuse (PPDA) cases. A number had been flagged incorrectly on the system and the 65 allegations was reduced to 50 allegations and 33 cases once correctly categorised. 19 remain live and 10 of those relate to criminal investigations which will be completed before the misconduct process begins. Guidance has been reissued so there shouldn't be any misunderstanding or misallocation going forward. Board agreed to revisit this at a future date. The PCC noted she had visited the emergency accommodation for the workforce at HQ last week, and thought it was a good facility and a lot of care was evident in putting it together.
- Action 45/24 – There had been positive changes in the behaviours and use of Stop and Search following the training. Further assurance work was required to be definitive. Seeing grounds recorded in Niche, confident training having an impact. The work under the 'Not Under Protected' Pillar of the Race Matters work focussing on hate crime was continuing and it was anticipated this would lead to learning and changes that could be applied widely across the crime types, focussing on the needs of the victim.
- Action 46/24 – A spotlight on one area had been provided to show the use of the ASB legislation.
- Action 47/24 – The Board had received a report identifying the crossover of three areas between the recent Joint Area Targeted Inspection (JTAI) in Somerset and the Child Protection Inspection Report from November 2023.

3 Finance

a) Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update

ASP's Chief Finance Officer provided an oral update to the Board on the progress of the MTFP.

The Budget announced by the Government recently had not provided detail on the implications for policing. There had been a brief mention of policing in the speech and associated documents. Police funding would be affected by the announcement on the changes to National Insurance and the estimated increase to costs for Avon and Somerset was anticipated to be around £5.5m, though work continued to finalise this. It was anticipated the Government would provide funding to offset this cost for the Public Sector though the detail of this were not available yet and are expected to be covered in the details of the funding settlement due to be announced in December.

The Board discussed the Neighbourhood Policing uplift and the baseline numbers of PCSOs. ASP will be responding to the letter from the Government on this.

The ASP Finance Team would start drafting the numbers in the MTFP, though it was noted there will be significant information that would remain unknown until the funding announcements had been made, including the information that the Local Authorities would need to provide.

The Board were advised the level of precept that the PCC could set would prove critical to the budget and early indications suggested the Government would cap this somewhere between £13 and £15.

It was noted there would be a Spending Review in Spring 2025 and the Home Office have requested all forces model consistently to national assumptions to inform this work and allow national modelling of budgets.

b) Q2 Financial Performance Report

ASP's Chief Finance Officer highlighted headlines from the report that had been provided to the Board:

- The Revenue budget overspend and reduced since Q1 by £1.0m and this was largely due to transfers to reserves to fund £0.7m for Hinkley and £0.3m for Speed Enforcement
- The marginal overspend in other employee costs was expected to continue to reduce to budget and could move into underspend by the end of the budget period
- The response to Op Navette protests and the move to 12 hours shifts had an impact on overtime overspend. Following discussion at ASP's Strategic Planning Meeting work was underway to address this. The impact of continued overtime on the welfare of the workforce was of concern.
- The Capital budget had spent £10.9m to date and forecast £11.2m to be spent, which left £11.2m to be carried forward to 25/26 on committed spend.

The Board discussed the refunds for Op Navette, ASP had submitted around £500k of costs and awaited the Home Office review and decision on reimbursements to forces.

The PCC was keen to understand a timeline on the work to address the overtime overspend and was advised this would be clearer in Q3.

The Board discussed the £100k underspend in citizens in policing, noting it was largely the savings from the PCSO posts.

The PCC noted the underspend on federation subscriptions for specials and would welcome further discussion on it in the future.

The Board discussed the underachievement in the speed enforcement income and the reasons for this. It was not believed to be due to a lack of staff in the department, the volume of work was not as high and there had been robotic process automation (RPA) in the department. ASP had started some work to understand this further, believing there had been a change in the behaviours of road users.

4 Portfolio Highlight Report

a) Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)

ASP's Chief Finance Officer provided an oral update to the Board on the ERP project. The project team were working with suppliers to build the required interfaces and working to provide a timeline and understanding options and implications of a phased go-live. The financial implications were also being worked through. The latest date for Go-Live was estimated to be October 2025, though it was anticipated it would be possible to go-live at an earlier date. The Board noted the preference to ensure it was as easy as possible for staff and ensuring it was done right, not quickly.

5 Decisions

a) Operation Bright Light

The PCC highlighted the agreement she had made following discussions around the extension to Operation Bright Light to underwrite the cost of the project. This was further to the decision recorded earlier in the year regarding the first tranche.

The Board discussed the ways the detail and learnings of the project would be shared publicly.

6 Chief Constable's Update

The Chief Constable provided an oral update to the Board on her risks and issues. The Chief Constable remained concerned about the wellbeing of the workforce, she had heard staff feeling overwhelmed and a sense of burnout. The service to the public is affected by the workforce feeling that way. The Chief was concerned about the sense of organisational justice and how that impacts on procedural justice.

The Chief advised the Board the results of the staff survey would be shared with the workforce the following day and this showed the evidence of her concerns and highlighted the departments where the issues are felt most intently. The HMICFRS Inspection and also the Leadership work the senior officers had been undertaking also provided evidence of the concern in the workforce.

The Chief and her Chief Officer's (COG) have been considering the issues and have seen some positive change but recognised more systemic changes were needed. The Chief was bringing together her senior leaders at the end of the week to spend time discussing the concerns and expected to produce new initiatives to address the wellbeing of the workforce.

It was recognised that not all issues were within the Chief's own gift to deal with, such as the need for more officers, equal funding, more levers e.g. IT. But senior leaders can have impact and ensure the workforce are assured that COG know the issues.

The PCC was interested in the communication of the outcome of the work with the wider workforce and the intended timeline. The Chief described the ways the updates would cascade and be shared and expected to have decisions by Christmas on the work needed.

The Chief is seeking to address the disconnection felt by the workforce and create communities of Sergeants, Inspectors, Chief Inspectors to increase cross directorate working.

7 Key Organisational Risks and Issues

The Board noted ASP are working to explore the feasibility of an Evidence-Based Investigative Tool (EBIT), with a business case expected early in 2025. EBIT is expected to help support decision-making to triage crime reports for allocation according to proportionate lines of enquiry and the gravity of the offence.

Currently there are a high number of crimes with no lines of enquiry being allocated to officers and there is a disproportionate amount of work going in to them. EBIT has an academically designed system to ensure those without lines of enquiry are not allocated to officers, allowing officers to focus on those crimes with higher levels of solvability and with the most likely chance of successful conviction. It is a system already used in other forces and supported by HMICFRS.

It is similar to the approach taken with Bluestone cases and would be completed by the Incident Assessment Unit.

8 Tackling Disproportionality and Racism Update

An oral update to the Board was provided by the Improvement Consultant in the absence of ACC White, highlighting the key items of progress:

- 6 members had been recruited to the new Independent Scrutiny and Advice Board, the first meeting would take place next week, followed by 2 training days. ASP were working with a member of the PCC's team to learn from her multi agency board.
- Community Engagement meetings were booked to consider procurement and how make it more inclusive, how ASP could better extend the reach.
- The Reconciliation Pilot in St Paul's supported by NPCC and CoP – ASP would support financially and provide resources for an evaluation.
- The cohort of 20 Race Influencers were due to commence their training next week from Representation Matters. ASP will issue a baseline survey to assess how confident they feel on matters before the training and a follow up survey after 6 months. The next cohort have been identified if it is successful.
- The Race Matters Continuous Professional Development starts in January and will focus on specialist areas of business CID, Ops, Firearms, Custody.
- Performance frameworks and monitoring – the national performance framework and pack is due next year. ASP are developing a local one but will sync to the national work to ensure appropriate benchmarking.

The PCC was particularly interested in the processes around procurement and working through the impact of the training and evaluation as well as the Commissioning from the Community.

The PCC highlighted the incident that had taken place on Stapleton Road on Halloween, sharing the concerns and frustrations of the community. The Chief understood the impact of the incident and the concerns and advised ASP had been transparent with the community, sharing the Body Worn Video with them. A PSD process was in progress.

The Board agreed to defer the discussion on the slides from the Bristol Muslim Strategic Leaders Group to future a GSB once they had been published.

9 Performance against Police and Crime Plan:

a) Integrated Performance and Quality Report

The PCC was keen to understand when the people identified to fill the 7 vacant posts in the Internet Child Abuse Team would be in post. It was noted the need for an increase in resource in the team had been identified due to an AFI from HMICFRS. There was some training required in advance of joining the team. HMICFRS would be returning early next year to check progress on this. ASP were focussed on moving people in as quickly as possible but did not have sufficient volunteers for that team at the moment.

It was noted that Child Sexual Exploitation flagged recorded crime had decreased by 41%. This had been due to a RPA not working correctly, this had been corrected. The PCC received assurance there were processes in place to check other RPAs were working correctly.

The Board discussed the grading of calls as ASP believed the 'Priority' grading had been overused. ASP were reviewing this, if calls are graded appropriately, it was believed the number of Priority calls would reduce which would provide more capacity for officers to respond to Domestic Abuse (DA) calls. With the new EVR officers were more likely to get there more quickly. It was noted this was ongoing work and the output has not been seen yet. ASP were focussed on making sure the risk assessment is correct at first point of contact, using Sergeants to ensure the gradings were correct and based on risk and ensuring those calls where officers really need to get there in an hour are identified.

The PCC highlighted ASP were in the bottom quartile for their DA arrest rate and wanted to understand how ASP would improve this. It was noted this had also been highlighted at the Constabulary Management Board. ASP were working to understand the data and considering a deep dive on DA data as there are a few areas to fully understand and this was part of the work they had asked academics to look at.

b) Follow up Assurance Report – Domestic Abuse

The Board discussed the mock JTAs that were underway across the Force. ASP had requested that once findings were available key themes would be highlighted and shared across the partnerships.

The Child Protection Inspection raised the need for ASP to commission a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference peer review. There were 5 processes underway across the Force – it was seen as a good process and whilst presenting a challenge for the partners it had also been a great opportunity. The initial findings expected on 13 November and final report was expected in February 2025.

The Board discussed the DA Matters training which was ongoing. An assessment of the training was expected.

The Bluestone training would be focussed on PCDA and DHEP students initially and it was expected this would have an impact and lead to higher arrest rates. ASP will also build this into existing training programmes to ensure the learning is embedded and refreshed with officers. DA elements had also been introduced to other scenarios in training, such as Road Traffic Collisions, investigative training and personal safety training.

The Board discussed the reasons why some cases were closed as the statutory time limit had expired. Inexperienced officers won't always appreciate that charging thresholds are different. Joint assurance work with the Crown Prosecution Service picked out the specific offences this issue related to and ASP and CPS co-designed wording to provide pop up advice to officers on the crime recording system to highlight statutory time limits where these differ. This has not been implemented yet but the baseline work is complete.

10 HMICFRS Recommendations and AFIs

An Inspection of vetting, misconduct and misogyny in the police service in November 2022 recommended that "Chief constables who have not already carried out a review of all allegations relating to prejudicial and improper behaviour, should do so." The PCC noted this was still incomplete for ASP and requested an update. This review was ongoing, ASP had identified 280 cases and 180 remained outstanding. It was anticipated this would be completed in advance of the next Board. Update at next meeting – would be helpful to understand what has been found as result.

The DCC noted the progress that had been made on completing and closing the recommendations and AFIs since the Superintendent had been in post and the improvements in the timeliness, expressing his gratitude for this.

11 People and Organisational Development Update

The Chief Officer – People and Organisational Development provided a brief oral update to the Board to supplement the report provided, highlighting concerns nationally with PC recruitment and the impact the national scrutiny police were under might be having. ASP currently remained on target to recruit their uplift numbers but the national picture was challenging. ASP met fortnightly to review any issues in recruitment.

Support had been increased to DHEP students following a decline in pass rates and this had been improving over the last 12 months, with people being well prepared to pass.

12 Professional Standards Update

a) Quarterly Report

b)

The Board noted the report, in particular the fact that 43% of outstanding complaints were finalised and in the 28 day review period. It was noted more cases remain with PSD investigators now which creates capacity for Inspectors out on the teams.

c) IOPC Independent Investigation Update

8 cases had been finalised by the IOPC since the last quarterly report; a number of these had resulted in learning for the officer. There were 15 live cases, 1 from 2021, 8 from 2023

and 6 from 2024. The Board noted the timeliness of IOPC and CPS investigations can be an issue. It was anticipated the national Accountability Review would reduce the cases where the impact on the individual was so high.

d) OPCC Complaints Review Data

The Board noted the report.

Date of the next Governance and Scrutiny Board: 18 December 2024 13:30 - 15:00 and 15:30 – 17:00