

# Meeting Notes

**Title:** Performance and Delivery Board

**Date & time:** Wednesday 10 March 2021, 1000hrs

**Venue:** Virtual (due to Covid-19)

**Attendees:** **Office of the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner:** Matthew Scott (Police and Crime Commissioner), Adrian Harper (Chief Executive) and Rob Phillips (Chief Finance Officer)

**Kent Police:** Chief Constable Alan Pughsley and Deputy Chief Officer Ian Drysdale

## 1. Welcome & Introduction

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) opened the meeting and welcomed those in attendance. In light of the elections scheduled for May, the PCC explained that the Force had been asked to provide a 'end of term report' on delivery against his Safer in Kent plan.

## 2. Notes of Previous Meeting – 9 December 2020

The notes from the meeting held on 9 December were noted as a true and accurate record.

The actions from the meeting were discharged as follows:

- Force to provide an update on recommendations in HMICFRS report 'Roads Policing: Not optional' outside of meeting – received with thanks.

## 3. Safer in Kent Plan 2017-2021: End of Term Report

- The Chief Constable introduced the report advising that it covered the last four years, with some exceptions due to data being unavailable.
- He said the Police and Crime Plan complemented the Mission, Vision, Values and Priorities, as well as the Kent Police Control Strategy.
- Setting the context, he highlighted that the Force had made £100 million savings whilst experiencing an increase in overall demand and dealing with the challenges of Covid-19 in the last year.
- Vulnerability, visibility and public contact had remained priorities throughout; resources had been bolstered by council tax precept increases resulting in the delivery of a quality service where victims were at the heart of everything the Force did.

### Putting victims first

- Hate crime victim satisfaction had increased from 74% in 2018 to 79.4%. 'Making contact' was up by 4.4% to 94.2%; 'Action taken' by 2.5% to 78.3%; 'Kept informed' and 'Treatment by officers' had remained stable at 70.2% and 85.1% respectively.
- Domestic abuse victim satisfaction had increased from 85.2% in 2019 to 87.7%. 'Initial contact' was down by 2.9% to 91.5%; 'Action taken' was up by 2.9% to 90.1%; and 'Kept informed' by 5.7% to 81.0%. The Chief Constable advised that activity was underway to improve 'keeping victims informed'.
- 97.2% of rape victims felt officers treated them with dignity and respect (up from 97.1% in 2019) and 87.7% were satisfied they had been treated fairly throughout the case (down by 4.9%). The Chief Constable explained that possible responses were 'Yes', 'No' and 'Partly' with the latter being included in the 'No' category which explained some of the decrease.
- In terms of the wider criminal justice system, the Chief Constable reported significant improvements including:
  - 100% of remand cases being transferred to the CPS on time compared to 8% in 2018.
  - Timeliness for guilty and non-guilty files improving from 6% and 0% in 2018 to 92% and 87% respectively.

- A case file quality assurance error rate of 56% in 2018 (worst performing area) to 11.2% in January 2021 (3<sup>rd</sup> best nationally).
- Kent being ranked 42<sup>nd</sup> for Transforming Summary Justice in 2018 and now 24<sup>th</sup>.
- Kent being ranked 42<sup>nd</sup> in terms of Prosecution Team Performance Management in 2018 and now 12<sup>th</sup>.
- The Chief Constable said the work of the Witness Care Unit over the last four years, especially during Covid-19 and with the backlog of court cases, had been outstanding. The relationship was stronger than ever between the co-located services and the Force in providing a first-class service to victims and witnesses.
- In relation to Crime Data Integrity, the Chief Constable stated the Force's legitimacy was outstanding with HMICFRS finding a crime recording accuracy rate of 96.6%. Having conducted a more recent audit in May 2020, he said the Force Inspectorate found this had been maintained with an accuracy of around 94.5%.
- Noting the many examples of improvement throughout the update, the PCC paid tribute to the great work of the Force in putting victims and witnesses at the heart of the service, particularly during the pandemic.
- Recognising that improvements in criminal justice performance required the support of many partners, the PCC asked what action the Force had taken to mitigate the impact of court backlogs on victims and witnesses.
- The Chief Constable thanked the PCC for highlighting the important contribution of partners and also his efforts as Chair of the Kent Criminal Justice Board (KCJB) to influence and hold to account. He reported that the Force was treating it as a critical incident and a Gold Group had been set up which was meeting regularly. He added that he was also personally speaking to stakeholders about how to improve the service to victims, including most recently the Regional Coordinator of HM Courts. The Chief Constable said that he believed greater court capacity was needed in the county, but as yet he had not seen a plan as to how and when this would be achieved.
- The Chief Constable explained that the growth in officer numbers would also increase the number of cases going to court in the future. He added that the KCJB was the right forum for conversations and to hold organisations in the criminal justice system to account.
- The PCC shared the Chief Constable's frustrations, ambitions and drive to address the issue and said he would continue to be robust in his approach to ensure victims received the timely justice they deserved. He added that it was also necessary to ensure those brave enough to come forward and report crimes retained confidence in the criminal justice system.

#### Fighting crime and anti-social behaviour

- The Chief Constable advised that overall there had been a reduction in offences, highlighting the following:
  - Victim-based crime: in 2020 there were 146,958 offences, a decrease of 0.1% (-123) compared to 2017 and 11.6% decrease (-19,241) on 2019.
  - Burglary residential: in 2020 there were 5,660 offences, a decrease of 33.8% (-2,884) compared to 2018 and 28.5% decrease (-2,254) on 2019.
  - Burglary residential dwelling (i.e. excluding sheds and garages): in 2020 there were 3,806 offences, a decrease of 38.0% (-2,330) compared to 2018 and 31.3% decrease (-1,736) on 2019.
  - Burglary Business and Community: in 2020 there were 1,997 offences, a decrease of 39.5% (-1,305) compared to 2018 and 37.3% decrease (-1,189) on 2019.
- He added that the decreases were partly down to more people being at home during the pandemic, but this was not the only reason why the level of offences had fallen.
- The Chief Constable noted the impact of the Crime Squad which investigated linked offences of burglary and robbery. In the last two years they had made 572 arrests, dealt with 829 prisoners, and laid 1,780 charges. The resulting court sentences equated to 836 years in prison.
- In terms of anti-social behaviour (ASB), the Chief Constable reported that over the four-year period 2017 to 2020 incidents had increased by 28.6% (11,501), with 2020 seeing a 50% increase on 2019 (17,200 more incidents). He explained that a third of all incidents in 2020 were Covid-19 related and that three key types accounted for the majority of ASB: Rowdy or nuisance gatherings in public/impeding public access; Neighbour disputes/nuisance, including noise; and Noisy parties/organised events/raves.
- The PCC commended the Force's great work tackling crime and ASB. Recognising that prior to Covid-19 there had been reductions, he asked the Chief Constable if he was hopeful ASB would reduce as normality resumed and what steps were being taken to address ASB in local communities.
- The Chief Constable confirmed it was his expectation and ambition that ASB would reduce as a result of the new Harm Reduction Plan, coupled with the work of Community Safety Partnerships, the Town Centre PCs, the new Schools Unit and the PCSO Problem Solving Taskforce which consisted of 21 PCSOs.
- Noting the increase in dog thefts nationally, the PCC asked about the picture in Kent and what action the Force was taking to address.
- The Chief Constable provided reassurance that the levels nationally had not been seen in the county, advising that it had remained steady at around 120 thefts per year. Acknowledging that dogs were important family members, he stated that the Force was monitoring the issue closely. He said intelligence teams were developing a clearer picture and that police dog handlers worked closely with stakeholders including the Dog's Trust and RSPCA. He added that if the thefts involved organised crime, the Organised Crime Unit would also focus on the issue.

### Tackling abuse, exploitation and violence

- The Chief Constable reported that on average the Force recorded 33 modern slavery offences each month. He highlighted the great work the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Team was doing with partners to tackle the range of offences including forced labour, sexual exploitation and domestic servitude.
- Encouraging all victims of domestic abuse to come forward, the Chief Constable reported that in 2020 there were 38,147 offences – an increase of 47.3% (12,254) compared to 2017. In contextualising this, he explained that during the period there had been changes to how crimes were recorded and new crime types such as coercive and controlling behaviour and stalking and harassment introduced. He said the Force continued to robustly tackle domestic abuse in order to safeguard victims, referencing in particular the work to visit 200 vulnerable couples during the pandemic.
- Referring to the murder of Sarah Wellgreen, one of the most renowned cases in Kent over the last 4 years, the Chief Constable highlighted the skill, dedication and tenacity of the investigative team in bringing her murderer, Ben Lacomba, to justice despite not finding her body to date.
- The Chief Constable reported that rape offences had decreased by 14.7% (-345) over the last four years with 2020 seeing the lowest recorded volume in 5 years. Investment had included the creation of specific Rape Investigation (Phoenix) Teams and the introduction of Sexual Offences Liaison Officers to ensure victims received the highest standards of care. He said both had positively impacted on arrests and charges.
- The Chief Constable reported the following:
  - Total violent crime (covering a spectrum from non-injury reports to murder): in 2020 there were 83,766 offences, an increase of 21.7% (14,939) compared to 2017 and 1.7% decrease (-1,421) on 2019.
  - Robbery: in 2020 there were 1,419 offences, a decrease of 4.1% (-60) compared to 2017 and 27.2% decrease (-530) on 2019.
  - Sexual offences: in 2020 there were 5,809 offences, a decrease of 3.2% (-193) compared to 2017 and 11.3% decrease (-740) on 2019.
  - Violence against the person: in 2020 there were 76,538 offences, an increase of 24.8% (15,192) compared to 2017 and 0.2% decrease (-151) on 2019. Reflective of the growth in domestic abuse over the four-year period, but assaults on emergency workers also increased by 42.8% (394 offences) between March and December 2020 compared with 2019.
- In relation to knife crime the Chief Constable reported that in the last financial year there had been a 12.8% decrease (436 less victims). Amongst other positive results, he said the enforcement activity under Op Eminent had resulted in 3,685 arrests, 419 cash seizures and 1,825 weapon seizures.
- The PCC acknowledged the work of the Force and noted that whilst domestic abuse offences had increased, it was partly down to victims having the confidence to come forward which was positive.
- He asked for reassurance around the levels of reduction in sexual offences and rape. The Chief Constable explained that it was the result of the alignment in priorities between the Force and PCC office and the uplift in resources in terms of the Rape Investigation Teams and Sexual Offences Liaison Officers. He added it would remain a priority because of the impact on victims which stayed with them forever.
- The PCC reiterated his commitment to doing all he could to support the Force in tackling such serious offences and providing appropriate support for victims.

### Combating organised crime and gangs

- The Chief Constable highlighted the significance of Kent's geographic location in terms of Europe and London, advising that 85% of known county lines came from the capital. He said there were 59 county lines operating in Kent, which was a reduction from 82.
- With regards to the dedicated County Lines and Gangs Team created in April 2020, he reported that they had made 256 arrests, laid 305 charges and seized more than £150,000 in cash. He added that as a result of sustained and targeted proactive activity, two districts - Swale and Tonbridge and Malling – had been declared county lines free for 3 consecutive months and that there were no current established gangs in Kent.
- In relation to organised crime groups, the Chief Constable stated that over the past four years they had been relentlessly targeted. Since 2019, the Serious and Organised Crime Team had recovered millions of pounds in drugs and cash, made 255 arrests with 191 offenders being charged and remanded, resulting in court sentences equating to 821 years imprisonment. The Chief Constable gave some examples of the team's work, including the conviction and sentence of 3 males running a drugs line into Medway, an investigation into vulnerable Czech nationals being exploited in Dover, £6.5 million of assets being seized through the Proceeds of Crime Act, and over £5m being seized in counterfeit currency (largest seizure ever recorded).
- He said the Violence Reduction Unit had been instrumental in tackling violence through multi-agency, preventative work and reaching out to vulnerable young people who might otherwise be drawn into crime.
- Echoing the Chief Constables praise and thanks for the hard work of officers, staff and volunteers, the PCC stated that Kent's good performance had been acknowledged by both the Home Secretary and Policing Minister, particularly with regards to tackling county lines.
- Believing that the Force had a higher rate of positive outcomes from stop and searches than most forces, the PCC asked how this was being achieved. The Chief Constable confirmed that the conversion rate was higher

than other areas and stated that he welcomed scrutiny and transparency in how they were conducted. He said the training given to student constables was of a high standard and there was also a scrutiny panel attended by members of the Independent Police Advisory Group which reviewed body worn video footage of stop searches to identify any learning. He noted that supervisors had access to stop and search information, so relevant support or guidance could be provided to officers, but explained that it was important to look at the issue through a wider lens than just the numbers. He added that stop and searches which were intelligence-led and conducted professionally would always be supported by chief officers.

- Endorsing the Chief Constable's comments, the PCC stated that with appropriate training and scrutiny stop and search was a useful policing tool to help keep the public safe.

#### Providing visible neighbourhood policing and effective roads policing

- The Chief Constable noted the importance of PCSOs and the investment in specialist roles, such as the Domestic Abuse PCSO and Youth Engagement PCSO, as well as the newly created Problem Solving Taskforce. He also highlighted some of the teams that complemented them, including the Town Centre PCs and the newly created School PCs.
- He said the number of volunteers had increased by 1,000 over the last four years, including over 350 Cadets, 106 Community Police Volunteers and 349 Special Constables who could now join specialist units. He extended his thanks to all those who gave up their own time to support policing.
- Focusing on the Cadet programme, he said since its inception in October 2016, the number of active units had increased from 3 to 10 and Cadets from approximately 75 to 367. Additionally, opportunities were growing through the launch of the Mini Cadet programme for 8-11 year olds, as well as a new transition pathway for Cadets aged 16+ to support their aspirations for future employment, either inside or outside of the Force.
- The Chief Constable thanked the 179 registered volunteers who supported various police teams and acknowledged the extraordinary work of South East 4x4 Response and Kent Search and Rescue. He also referred to the growing success of Community Police Volunteers which had diversified into a plethora of strands, such as Equine, Aviation, Canine and Coastal.
- Highlighting the positive impact of the three multi-agency Task Force initiatives in Margate, Medway and Maidstone, the Chief Constable advised that they were focused on reducing crime and ASB, reducing vulnerability and building resilient communities.
- In terms of roads policing, the Chief Constable advised that the Road Safety Unit was formed in 2018 and provided a visible, high profile presence delivering enforcement and education relating to the 'fatal four' (Mobile Phones, Seatbelts, Drink/Drug Driving and Speeding). He said since its inception the team had contributed to the falling number of fatal, serious and slight injury collisions on the roads, as well as increased levels of enforcement.
- The PCC asked whether large-scale operations, including Napier Barracks and the EU Exit had impacted on local policing and what plans were in place to return to some form of normality. The Chief Constable provided assurance that there had been very limited impact due to the Force's resilience and provision of Mutual Aid from other forces. He added that the operation surrounding the EU Exit would soon be stood down and become business as usual.
- Acknowledging the good work of the Force, the PCC paid tribute to the efforts of all those involved in policing more recent challenges which had come on top of keeping the county safe.

#### Delivering an efficient and accessible service

- The Chief Constable advised that the Mental Health Team were continuing to work with partners to help those experiencing mental ill-health receive the right care from the most relevant agency. He reported that Section 136 detentions had decreased compared to 2019, although mental health-tagged incidents had increased. He said partnership work had been pivotal in reducing detentions, including improvements to the 836-advice line for officers, creation of Safe Havens and improved training for call handlers, adding that there was also better signposting and risk management.
- In terms of call handling, the Chief Constable reported that over the four-year period:
  - the average queuing time for 999 calls decreased from 13 to 9 seconds and the percentage of calls not answered from 1.4% to 0.7%;
  - the average queuing time for 101 calls decreased from 3 minutes to 55 seconds and the percentage of calls not answered from 18.4% to 5.3%;
  - there was a shift to alternative channels for non-emergency matters – namely Online Reporting which increased from 4,255 in 2017 to 29,865 in 2020; and Live Chat which increased from 1,162 in 2018 to 44,292 in 2020.
- Noting developments in technology, the Chief Constable advised that front line officers were now able to access relevant applications via mobile devices, meaning they spent less time at the station and more time being visible within communities. In 2018, the Force also migrated to Athena, an investigation, intelligence, custody and case system shared with nine other forces which enables authorised users to access information from across the region, saving time and reducing unnecessary bureaucracy.

- Referring to the Force's estate, the Chief Constable explained the priority had been to save and reinvest money back into frontline policing whilst maintaining a visible and accessible footprint in all the main towns. He said a prime example was the public enquiry counter at Deal which was on the periphery of town and only open for limited hours; working with the Town Council, the Force had been able to create a new Police Office at the Town Hall in the heart of the town with extended opening hours. He added that the Force had also commenced a project to rationalise the estate, which included a decision to sell Sutton Road.
- Through the use of telematics technology, the Chief Constable advised that the Force had been able to review vehicle usage and as a result, make capital investment with the benefit of increased operational response capability. He added that another financial and logistical challenge would be to move the current 857 vehicles to electric by 2030.
- In conclusion, the Chief Constable stated that following a recent inspection HMICFRS concluded that Kent Police had provided an "exemplary and high-quality policing response to the pandemic". He said it was a fitting accolade to all officers, staff and volunteers who had remained professional, dedicated and worked so hard to achieve the Police and Crime Plan priorities. He added that they should all feel incredibly proud.
- The PCC agreed and paid tribute to all officers, staff and volunteers, as well as the Force's leaders who had been so instrumental over the last four years, adding that HMICFRS' comments summed up the amazing achievements of Kent Police.
- Focusing on 101 call handling performance, the PCC asked whether the improvements were sustainable. The Chief Constable confirmed they were, particularly with the agility of the Force Control Room (FCR) staff to address emerging issues, continued investment in the FCR and alternative channels open to the public. He added the Force would continue to look for improvements to maintain the high level of service.
- The Chief Executive thanked all partners involved in the local criminal justice system, including the Witness Care Service for providing a first-class service to vulnerable victims. He said partners within the KCJB enjoyed effective relationships and worked incredibly hard to drive improvements.
- He asked the Chief Constable whether the joint Serious Crime Directorate (SCD) was still effective and benefitting Kent residents. The Chief Constable confirmed it was advising that it provided investigative capacity to address criminal behaviour affecting two counties as opposed to a whole region. He said SCD staff were highly motivated and specialists, working in teams to tackle the priorities within the Police and Crime Plan. Referring to the possible uplift in numbers of Kent officers into regional teams, he said he hoped to receive the same level of investment from those officers as he did from those in SCD.
- The PCC expressed his thanks to the Chief Constable for presenting the report and to everyone involved in pulling it together.

#### 4. People update

- DCO Drysdale highlighted the most recent HMICFRS 'Value for Money profile'. He explained that Kent remained a bottom quartile force in terms of how much funding it received, but was efficient in how it was spent.
- Between 1 April 2020 and 31 January 2021, 261 new officers were recruited via all entry routes, of which 24 were BAME representing 9.2%. That included 183 via the normal process; 55 through the Investigate First Scheme and 23 through other routes. 50 officers joined the Force on 18 January and would be on the streets by March, consisting of 30 via the normal process and 20 through the Investigate First Scheme. He added that it was anticipated 33 female officers would also join the Force by March 2021.
- DCO Drysdale reported that there were now 149 BAME officers in the Force, equating to 3.84% and an improvement on 3.42% last year. He advised this was the highest percentage of BAME officers in Kent Police for 11 years and there was representation at Chief Superintendent, Superintendent and Chief Inspector ranks, whereas some forces had no senior officer representation.
- DCO Drysdale confirmed the Force was on track to reach the establishment figure of 3,825 officers by the end of March 2021. He said the March 2022 figure was 3,970 and that if Kent received its share of the national uplift and all went to plan, there would be 4,145 officers by the March 2023 - an increase of 933 officers from 2012.
- DCO Drysdale advised that attrition had reduced during the pandemic. He said on average 18 officers had retired per month compared to the projected 25, but this was beneficial in terms of retaining experience. April 2020 to January 2021, 184 officers had left, giving the Force a turnover rate of 4.7% (usually 6.7%).
- In terms of staff absence, he reported that it was less than half of other forces during the pandemic and that:
  - For officers the average days lost per person decreased to 5.4 from 7.2.
  - For Police staff, excluding PCSOs, the average days lost per person decreased to 4.5 from 7.1.
  - For PCSOs the average day's lost per person decreased to 2.4 from 4.3.
- DCO Drysdale noted the Force's approach to health and wellbeing encompassed a hybrid of health screening and health promotion with support from the Chief Constable and the PCC by retaining resources within Health Services.
- In addition to Occupational Health and Wellbeing Services, the Force had adopted an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) which provided a 24-hour service for staff and immediate family. The EAP had received over 1,000 calls since its inception, 59 referrals for counselling and 3,274 portal hits for guidance.
- In relation to training, DCO Drysdale said the Learning and Development Team had been innovative in the development of digital platforms for packages, converting 37 traditional training packages to online.

- The Police Education Qualification Framework would be delivered in conjunction with Anglia Ruskin University and balance the improved officer induction period with maintaining visibility on Kent's streets.
- Develop Me/Develop You had been rejuvenated and re-launched to support the workforce to be the best they can.
- DCO Drysdale advised that Leadership Development training was continuing, with Kent officers achieving good results in the National Police Promotions Framework and many considered as outstanding in their class.
- Opening investigator roles to police staff 18 months ago had proved beneficial, with a member of staff recently winning the best investigator award and beating warranted police officers.
- Personal safety, including Taser and first aid training had continued with a 90% authorisation rate for use of the kit provided.
- DCO Drysdale reported that Operation Zenith continued at pace, with the aim of developing a hybrid between traditional methods of working and new methods introduced as a result of the pandemic.
- In terms of the officer uplift, DCO Drysdale advised that 47 officers would be going into the County Lines and Gangs Team; 77 into the Schools Unit; 47 into the Vulnerability hubs; 20 into Victim Justice Units; 8 into Prison Investigation; and 4 into Driver Training. He added that all 7 custody suites would also receive investment and the Force was currently modelling the mental health requirement.
- Whilst pleased to hear about the 90% authorisation rate, the PCC asked for clarification on how the Taser roll-out to frontline officers was progressing. Although DCO Drysdale did not have the details, he said the process had not been curtailed by the pandemic and there was still the opportunity for any officer to undertake the training and carry a Taser if successful. He added that the opportunity had been positively received. The PCC said it was good news and he was pleased the offer had been well-received by officers.
- The PCC thanked DCO Drysdale for the report and expressed admiration for way officers, staff and volunteers had been working, and also leading the way on many national issues.

##### **5. Topical issues / Update on Significant Operational Matters**

- The Chief Constable said he was proud of the way the Force had policed through Covid-19, not just policed it.
- In relation to HMICFRS' recent inspection on the response to Covid-19, he reported that they made the following comments about Kent Police:
  - Strong evidence of policing through Covid-19 via proactive, investigative capability
  - Strong evidence of looking after staff
  - Quick, timely, correct use of personal protective equipment
  - An exemplary and high-quality response to the pandemic
- He said officers, staff and volunteers had worked in a challenging environment where assaults on emergency workers had increased by 40%, including threats to give them Covid-19. As such, the word 'exemplary' was the correct term considering all members of Kent Police continued to perform brilliantly despite such challenges.
- The PCC endorsed the Chief Constable's comments and said he hoped HMICFRS would publish the report so residents could see how well the Force had performed. He also stated that he welcomed the increased sentence for assaulting emergency workers proposed in the Police, Crime Sentencing and Courts Bill.
- The PCC thanked the Chief Constable and chief officers for their leadership, support and professional exchanges over the last five years. He said he was proud to have worked alongside excellent officers, staff and volunteers in some of the most challenging circumstances, particularly during the unprecedented last year.

**Date of next Performance and Delivery Board: 30 June 2021**