

STRATEGIC SCRUTINY MEETING

WEDNESDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2019 AT 12:30PM IN ROOM CH1:08, COUNTY HALL

NOTE

PRESENT

Clive Grunshaw - Police & Crime Commissioner
Andy Rhodes - Chief Constable, Lancashire Constabulary

IN ATTENDANCE

Angela Harrison - Director, OPCC
Terry Woods – ACC, Lancashire Constabulary
Ian Cosh – Director of Resources, Lancashire Constabulary
Ian Dawson - Superintendent, Lancashire Constabulary
Steve Freeman. Chief Finance Officer, OPCC
Ian Dickinson – Governance & Policing Lead, OPCC
Jane Pearson – Project Support Officer, OPCC

NOTE AND ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING

The Police and Crime Commissioner noted that all of the actions identified at the last meeting had been completed.

ITEM 2 – PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Chief Constable presented a report in relation to the performance of Lancashire Constabulary. Crime data is taken from Forcesight which goes up to the 30 November 2018, or the recorded crime BI Dashboard, which goes up to 31st December 2018.

Fracking

In noting the report the Commissioner recognised that he received regular briefings through his office.

Tackling Crime & Re-Offending

Recorded Crime

Recorded crime continues to rise. There was a 36% increase in the year to the end of November 2018.

The Commissioner recalled the issues concerning the inspection of CDI and subsequent increases in recorded crime which had been examined and discussed in previous scrutiny meetings. The Commissioner noted that violence without injury was the main issue within violence against a person. Whilst the recorded number of violence with injury has reduced, serious assaults had seen a 50% increase. There is however, a crime recording context in that we would expect from past history for there to be some movement upwards as a result of improved reporting.

The Commissioner noted that ASB incidents have continued to fall, however as previously reported by the Constabulary, many of what were previously ASB incidents were now captured within public order offences.

The Commissioner noted that there had been a fall in burglary since the last Scrutiny meeting, however all robbery recorded crime had increased in 41 police force areas – 11% in Lancashire.

Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) Threats

The Commissioner was informed that cashpoint (ATM) thefts were still a regional priority for the Constabulary and links were maintained with North West Regional Organised Crime Unit (NWROCU). As a direct result of regional cooperation and proactive targeting, a significant wanted offender had been arrested for 5 ATM offences.

It was noted that the main County Lines (linked to threats of violence, intimidation and exploitation) threats were from Merseyside, Manchester and West Yorkshire. However, County lines had been established from London, Oxford and Birmingham.

Tasking around County Lines was managed for the Constabulary through the Serious Harm Tasking process with a specific focus on mainstreaming activity on areas that have attached vulnerability. This had increased the Constabulary's understanding of the county lines threat and identified vulnerabilities in our communities and reflected in the increasing number of County Lines Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) that were mapped.

Road Safety

The Chief Constable informed the Commissioner that the number of persons killed or seriously injured continued to reduce. However, these findings were overshadowed by a substantial increase in the number of fatally injured casualties of road traffic collisions. Provisional figures showed 48 live fatal investigations for 2018. In depth analysis had failed to identify any significant patterns or trends, with many fatalities being the result of very tragic circumstances. The Commissioner noted that the large workload was proving impactful on the Collision Investigation Unit (CIU) and the Road Death Investigation (RDI) teams and this had now been put on the Constabulary's Risk Register.

The Commissioner asked the Chief Constable if the accidents on the motorway had been the result of more people texting whilst driving. The Chief Constable explained that the main reasons for the accidents were phones, drink/drug driving and speeding and that the increase was a national trend.

The Commissioner noted that the Drink and Drug Drive campaign over December 2018, was a success and the resulted in 285 arrests compared to 219 in 2017.

ACTION: The Chief Constable to ask about safety messages being put out on the motorway networks.

Supporting Vulnerable People & Victims

The Commissioner was informed that following the Constabulary Crime Data Integrity (CDI) inspection in July 2017 there had been a sharp increase in the number of domestic abuse cases resulting in evidential difficulty. As a result a piece of work was carried out to determine whether the rise in evidential difficulties was in proportion to the rise in total domestic abuse cases. Overall, the work illustrated that domestic abuse cases were 1.237 times more likely to be recorded as evidential difficulty after the CDI inspection.

Despite the rise in evidential difficulties, the satisfaction level from Domestic Abuse victims with the service provided by Lancashire Constabulary remained high.

ACTION: The Chief Constable to share the research with the Commissioner around the satisfaction level of domestic abuse victims.

Item 1

As reported in the last scrutiny meeting, hate crime incidents remained on the increase. In response to the recent HMICFRS thematic inspection of Hate Crime in other forces, the Constabulary have produced a Hate Crime action plan that will be managed through the HMICFRS Board.

In relation to Modern slavery, the Chief Constable informed the Commissioner that there had been a reduction in terms of the number of intelligence reports/incidents received regarding concerns of activity during the last 6 months, with sexual exploitation being the most frequently reported. Further work had been undertaken by the Constabulary to gain greater understanding of the gaps that exist in Lancashire.

The Commissioner asked the Chief Constable if Brexit would increase or decrease the modern slavery issues in Lancashire. The Chief Constable confirmed that this wasn't flagged as a specific risk. However, intelligence mapping would continue to be developed.

As per previous scrutiny reports, the issues with demand around reported missing from home incidents was raised. There had been considerable evidence based policing research undertaken in risk identification and return from home interviews. A pilot project was being developed by the Constabulary that would trial a multi-agency team to tackle missing from homes in the future.

The Commissioner asked the Chief Constable if the missing from homes were more elderly people. The Chief Constable stated it was mainly young people, mostly running away from children's home in South and East Division and mostly running away from residential homes in West Division.

Developing Confident Communities

The Commissioner was informed that public satisfaction in relation to burglary offences (down 4%) and hate crime offences (down 3%) have decreased. Whereas satisfaction in the overall policing service for ASB (up 2%) and violent crime (up 6%) had increased. Training was planned to improve data extraction and understanding of survey data. This would include streamlining the survey questions and survey process to improve analysis of data.

The Commissioner recalled that at the last scrutiny meeting concern was raised in relation to the Constabulary's response to grade 3 incidents. In response the Chief Constable explained that the National target for time to respond was 48 hours and Lancashire was currently taking around 10 hours to respond, which was an increase of 5 hours compared to the same period last year. The Chief explained that the increase was a direct correlation of increased time to arrive, an increase in crime recording, along with changes in distribution of work and training for Connect.

The Chief Constable assured the Commissioner that the Constabulary were looking at solutions to address the Grade 3 response times.

ACTION: The Chief Constable is asked to provide a further report at the next scrutiny meeting

The Chief Constable informed the Commissioner that in the 12 month period to September, overall public confidence in Lancashire Constabulary had decreased. It was noted that officers from Lancashire Constabulary were working with the OPCC

ACTION: The Chief Constable to review the different surveys and methodology.

ITEM 3 – CONTACT MANAGEMENT

The Chief Constable informed the Commissioner that the POD working was working well and a full POD evaluation would be completed in March 2019, which will evaluate 6 months' worth of data. The evaluation would also make a recommendation on whether the POD working approach had delivered sufficient benefits to warrant the disruption and expense of rebuilding the Control Room in 2019/20.

The Commissioner noted that with the recent intake of 30 PCRO's being operational in the room from December, the staffing level had reached the new 345 level. The Chief Constable explained that it took a new PCRO approximately two and a half years to be fully competent in the role. Therefore, whilst the increase in staffing was helping with demand, there was currently a large amount of effort going in to training and mentoring the new staff. Due to this, it would take some time before the full benefits of the new staffing level would be realised.

In response to a question from the Commissioner, the Chief Constable explained that discussions were ongoing with Unison in relation to staff progression levels. Further, the Chief informed the Commissioner that staff retention in the Control Room was improving as was the sickness level. .

The Chief Constable informed the Commissioner that in relation to 999 calls, there had been an 11.6% rise in demand overall across the quarter. From October 2018, demand had increased month by month. However, despite the increase in demand, the abandonment rate remained very low and was lower than the same period last year.

In relation to 101 calls, the Commissioner was informed that this remained a priority for the constabulary. Again, whilst there had been an increase in 101 demand over the last year, and talk time length has also increased identifying vulnerability of callers, however, the abandonment rate for 101 had been steadily falling.

Accordingly, the Commissioner noted the report.

ACTION: The Chief Constable is asked to present a report to the next scrutiny meeting in relation to the POD pilot and to advise the Commissioner of his decision whether to implement POD working on a permanent basis.

ITEM 4 – STOP & SEARCH

The Commissioner received a report in respect of Stop & Search.

The Chief Constable informed the Commissioner that they had received good feedback from the HMICFRS regarding stop and search.

The data available from January to November showed an increase in stop searches compared to the previous year. A Section 60 authority had been put in place in South Division for knife crime in November 2018, and a push on youth related anti social behaviour had been addressed in West Division. Drug searches accounted for 55% of the searches and this level has been consistent for a number of years.

The Commissioner was informed that there was no evidence of dis-proportionality in the use of stop and search and complaints in this area remained low over the years.

ITEM 5 – POLICE & CRIME PANEL ISSUES

No issues to discuss.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next scheduled Strategic Scrutiny meeting will be held on 4th June 2019 at 1pm in Room CH1:08, County Hall, Preston

PART II

ITEM 7 – HMICFRS UPDATE

The Commissioner received an update report in relation to the activity undertaken by the Constabulary following the recent HMICFRS inspections.

A Harrison
Director