



STRATEGIC SCRUTINY MEETING

NOTE OF THE STRAYEGIC SCRUTINY MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 12 JANUARY AT {DOCPROPERTY MEETINGTIME * MERGEFORMAT} IN ROOM E11, COUNTY HALL PRESTON

PRESENT

**Mr C Grunshaw – Police and Crime Commissioner
Mr S Finnigan – Chief Constable**

IN ATTENDANCE

**Mrs A Harrison – Deputy Monitoring Officer
Mr I Dickinson – Standards & Governance Officer
Mr R Ruston –**

**Mr M Bates – ACC (Territorial)
Superintendent M Horn**

Contact Management

The Commissioner received an update on the performance of the Constabulary's Contact Management department.

The Commissioner was pleased to hear the department's performance had improved significantly since the initial Force Control Room merger into a single contact centre, with targets being hit on just over 89% of emergency calls. On average, 999 calls were answered within 4.7 seconds – compared to 13.6 seconds when the control rooms first merged last April.

However, it was noted that the Constabulary aimed to hit targets 90 per cent of the time on 999 calls and ACC Mark Bates assured the Commissioner that they were striving to do that.

The Commissioner recognised that the performance of the 101 service was something which was extremely concerning to both himself and the public. Whilst he appreciated that the Constabulary's contact management team had undergone the most changes as a result of the cuts, there could be no excuses for the previous poor performance of this key service.

The Commissioner pushed the Constabulary hard on ensuring this improves, and it is clear the Chief Constable was focussed on raising standards. It was noted that there were no longer any complaints about the service and the force was exceeding its ambition to hit service level targets on 80% of calls.

The Commissioner was concerned to see that the longest call waiting times in both November and December were in excess of 20 minutes, however he was assured that this was due to a software system error and would be rectified.

Crime Statistics

The Police and Crime Commissioner received an update in relation to the Constabulary's performance

It was noted that Lancashire's crime recording was recently praised by HMIC and that the public could have confidence the data was accurate.

It was noted that whilst the long term trend (April 2011 to November 2014) in relation to all recorded crime was downwards, Lancashire had seen a 0.2% increase when comparing December 2013 – November 2014 with the corresponding period the previous year – the second best performance in the North West and also the second best performance when compared with our most similar forces.

There had been quite a sharp rise in the number of rapes reported – up 20.1% - however this was the smallest rise in the North West and was the third smallest among our similar forces. Rape is clearly a high victim impact crime and the Commissioner pressed the Chief Constable on reasons for this increase, which had been attributed to increased educational work and also increased confidence around reporting historic sexual offences, which had in turn resulted in increased confidence to report present day rapes.

The same can be said for sexual offences, although the Constabulary's rise was smaller than local and comparable forces, a statistic the Chief Constable attributed to excellent pro-active work around this which had been on-going in the force since 2005.

The Commissioner recognised that there was clearly a balance between pushing for increased reporting of both recent and historic crime and monitoring the resultant upturn in crime statistics, particularly around rape and sexual offences. However, the Commissioner accepted that he did not believe these increases – at a time when other crime types continue to fall – were any reason for alarm but would continue to monitor performance in this area.

In October 2013, the Commissioner asked the force to start recording data on repeat offenders, to allow him to build up a picture of the proportion of first-time offenders in comparison to those with a criminal record.

That data was now available from October 2014 – December 2014, based on the year previous, and showed 11% of offences over that three month period in Lancashire were committed by offenders who had offended in the last 365 days.

However, this appeared a particularly low number of repeat offenders, and the Constabulary had said further work needed to be carried out to ensure the data was robust.

Actions:-

- Enhanced data required re victims of Business Crime visa vi their specific reflection in the new Victims' Code.
- A further breakdown of Hate Crime data, including divisional picture and overall satisfaction rates.
- Develop the data and narrative relating to repeat offenders.
- Further breakdown of complaints data including what number upheld in each category, and appeal data.

Public Confidence and Satisfaction levels

A concerning element of the scrutiny meeting was around satisfaction levels for Lancashire Constabulary, which had dropped by around 4%. The main areas of concern were in public satisfaction around both burglary and vehicle crime, and the Chief Constable highlighted this as an area he was investigating.

It was thought the level of cuts sustained by Lancashire Constabulary – and the expectations of the county's residents, was having an impact on satisfaction levels.

Lancashire was judged to be a high-performing force and it was vital for public confidence that was the experience they had when they come into contact with the Constabulary's officers. This was an area the Commissioner will continue to scrutinise over the next quarter.

However, despite the drop off in satisfaction levels the Commissioner was pleased to note the fact public confidence remains high at 91%.

MASH (Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub)

Following on from the recent HMIC crime inspection, which recommended an immediate review of resourcing and prioritising tasks from Lancashire's MASH, the Commissioner requested an update from the Chief Constable on the hub's performance.

On average, the hub was dealing with 50,000 police referrals a year, and worked to support the most vulnerable residents who might otherwise become a drain on police resources and require further intervention in future.

The Commissioner was delighted to hear the initiative was working so well for the Constabulary, and asked for the Chief Constable to prepare a report to evidence the cost-effectiveness of the MASH against the support its users would have otherwise required.

Actions:-

- Articulate a clear plan re Restorative Justice, including aims and the focus of RJ Co-ordinators.
- Check MASH figures re 300 / 900 unprocessed – totals or area based.
- MASH outcomes measure to be defined – what is success?
- Copy of plan referred to in report to be shared with OPCC.
- Question whether there is a link to persistent or repeat complainants, in respect of their potential (mental health) vulnerability.