



STRATEGIC SCRUTINY MEETING

**MONDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2021 AT 1.00PM IN SAVOY SUITE, COUNTY HALL,
PRESTON**

MINUTES

PRESENT

Andrew Snowden - Police and Crime Commissioner
Chris Rowley - Chief Constable, Lancashire Constabulary

IN ATTENDANCE

Angela Harrison – Director, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Sacha Hatchett – Deputy Chief Constable, Lancashire Constabulary
Russ Procter – Assistant Chief Constable, Lancashire Constabulary
Ian Cosh – Director of Resources, Lancashire Constabulary
Ian Dawson – Assistant Chief Constable, Lancashire Constabulary
Stasia Osiowy – Chief Superintendent, Lancashire Constabulary
Wendy Bower – Chief Superintendent, Lancashire Constabulary
Duncan Arthur – Inspector, Lancashire Constabulary
Ian Dickinson - Standards and Governance Officer, Office of Police and Crime Commissioner

1. NOTE AND ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING

The Police and Crime Commissioner was pleased to note that all the actions identified at the last meeting had either been completed or ongoing and no actions were outstanding.

It was also noted that the format of the meeting would be changing following the launch of the new Police and Crime Plan on the 9 December 2021.

2. PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Commissioner received an update on the Constabulary's performance against the current Police and Crime Plan.

In relation to the National Crime and Policing measures, it was noted that the Constabulary was reporting a reduction across most indicators of serious violence and neighbourhood crime except in relation to firearms. However, it was believed that this increase was more than likely due to a change in the way firearm incidents were recorded rather than a greater risk to the public of



Lancashire. Accordingly, the Deputy Chief Constable was looking into the matter and discussing the position with regional forces to ensure that recording is consistent.

In relation to Victim Satisfaction the Chief Constable informed that Commissioner that the Constabulary had engaged the services of UCLan to better understand the factors impacting on satisfaction levels. The Chief Constable advised the Commissioner that the survey would also involve Lancashire Victim Services and other key professionals and the findings would be provided to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner in due course.

The Deputy Chief Constable advised the Commissioner that recorded crime was now back to pre-pandemic levels except for burglary. In this regard it was considered that this was possibly due to people still working from home.

In relation to public order offences, it was noted that the Constabulary had witnessed a steep increase from the lifting of lockdown in March to a peak in July, replicating the seasonal trends of previous years. However, it was recognised that the increase in recorded public order offences could be attributed to the Constabulary's proactive policing approach.

In noting the excellent partnership working in relation to the bonfire night safety campaign (Bright Sparx), both the Commissioner and the Chief Constable condemned the recent behaviour of youths in Blackburn who attacked the emergency services with fireworks.

The Commissioner was advised that the number of recorded sexual offences and rape had varied considerably from month to month, increasing from February to May and June respectively. It was noted that over the last 3 months, volumes had remained within the expected, forecasted range, although towards the upper limits and a recent increase has been observed during September and October. A clear trend was observed nationally following the Sarah Everard case and vigil in March/April and the latest increases reported by Op TALLA show an 18% increase over the last 4 weeks nationally, when compared with the same period in 2019. In terms of outcomes, the latest available national data showed Lancashire at 11.5% positive results for all sexual offences and 9.6% for rape cases, leading both the region and most similar group of forces.

In response to a question from the Commissioner in relation to 'spiking' of drinks, the Chief Constable advised that the Constabulary had a good understanding of the landscape and was working with licensee's, hospitals, and the ambulance service. Whilst there was no clear link to sexual offences through 'spiking' drinks in locally reported incidents the Chief Constable made the Commissioner aware of additional government funding that was made available to several forces to undertake pilot initiatives. Unfortunately, Lancashire was not one of the selected forces and the Commissioner agreed to consider a request from the Chief Constable to fund an operation relating to sexual offences and 'spiking' of drinks



in the run up to Christmas.

By way of background, the Commissioner was advised that 248,500 calls were presented to the Force Control Room between July and September 2021, compared with 251,000 for the same period in 2020. Police Control Room Operators answered 200,000 calls compared to 198,000 in the same period 2020.

In relation to service levels during the latest quarter, the Commissioner was advised that 66.6% of 999 calls were answered within the desired service level of 10 seconds and 29.9% of 101 calls were answered within 40 seconds. Abandonment rates were 1.1% for 999s and 28.4% for 101 calls.

In noting that service levels for the period were impacted by a combination of resourcing levels due to increased absence through covid / sickness and an increase in call demand post easing of restrictions, the Commissioner sought further clarity in relation to sickness levels in the force control room. In response, ACC Procter assured the Commissioner that the management of sickness and COVID absences with appropriate return to work processes were being followed. Further, analysis had indicated that during November, 90 hours had been lost to non-covid sickness and 20 hours to covid. This related to a sickness level of around 6% which the Commissioner considered commendable.

The Chief Constable advised the Commissioner that it was his intention to decant the South Pod, currently located at the Preston Operating Centre, to the Control Room at HQ in April 2022.

The Commissioner sought an update in relation to online reporting. In response ACC Procter cautioned against the possibility of reducing the demand on 101 by channelling people to on-line reporting. It was noted that evidence indicated that the shift to online reporting would only see greater reporting and demand placed on the Constabulary. However, it was important to understand why people give up calling or abandoning the call to the constabulary and encouraged staff from the OPCC to take the details and forward them to the Constabulary.

The Commissioner received an update in relation to mental health demand, concerns for welfare and Section 136 detentions.

It was noted mental health demand has followed a clear seasonal trend, peaking in the summer months each year. However, the Deputy Chief Constable informed the Commissioner that demand during May-September 2021 had exceeded that in previous years. The Chief Constable had negotiated with Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust (LSCFT) to fund a Lancashire police officer and vehicle to work with LSCFT in a triage car with a member of LSCFT from December 2021 up till 15th January 2022, together with a vehicle for them to use. Furthermore, When Initial Response Service (IS) goes



live Lancashire Police will fund a Police Officer to support the delivery of IRS. Meanwhile, LSCFT will review the positioning of their clinical resource, currently sat in Ambulance control, and ascertain if they would be better located in Lancashire Police control room.

In relation to Section 136 detentions, both the Chief Constable and the Commissioner recognised the hard work of officers and staff from all the organisations involved and both agreed that they were dealing with a system issue. At present, it was incumbent on police officers to stay with s136 patients until they have been assessed. On occasions this had resulted in up to 10 police officers being on bed watches in hospital at any one time.

The Commissioner was advised by the Chief Constable that discussions had taken place with the Chief Executive of the local health board to negotiate to use police officers on rest days to sit with 136 patients and pay for police officer overtime. This would free up those police officers who were on duty to undertake their shift duties.

3. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled to be held on Thursday 10 February 2021, at 1.00pm at County Hall, Preston.

PART II – PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

The following matter was discussed in private as it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

4. ROADS POLICING

The Commissioner received a report setting out the Constabulary's approach to Road Safety and the activities it undertakes, including the Constabulary's contribution to the Lancashire Roads Safety Partnership (LRSP).

In receiving the report, the Commissioner enquired as to the number of fixed camera sites operational at any given time.

Mrs A Harrison
Director