



Creating a safer  
**Cambridgeshire**

**To:** Business Coordination Board

**From:** Chief Constable

**Date:** 02 July 2020

## CONSTABULARY COVID UPDATE

### 1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Business Coordination Board ("the Board") on Cambridgeshire Constabulary's ("the Constabulary") response to the Covid19 coronavirus.

### 2. Recommendation

2.1 The Board is recommended to note this paper

### 3. Introduction

3.1 This paper provides an update on the Constabulary's response to the Covid19 coronavirus; both as a stand-alone organisation and as active partner in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Resilience Forum (CPLRF). It is the third paper, following a previous submission of the 13<sup>th</sup> May.

3.2 The paper provides the latest information concerning questions posed directly by the BCB in relation to the pandemic:

- The continuing Constabulary response to the demands placed by the Covid19 pandemic and planning for recovery
  - On-going Countywide partnership arrangements
  - Responding to changes in enforcement powers
  - Operational capability, service provision to the public
  - Strategic risks emerging and support required
- 3.3 Since the previous paper, strategic responsibility for the Constabulary's response to the pandemic has moved formally to Assistant Chief Constable Vicki Evans, who is now "Gold".
- 3.4 In accordance with established civil contingency doctrine and the broad impact of the pandemic, the Constabulary's approach currently is to sustain focus on "Response" and "Recovery" concurrently at this time.
- 3.5 Superintendent Robin Sissons maintains the "Silver" Tactical lead for the "Response" phase; T/Superintendent Steve Kerridge for "Recovery".

#### **4 Key Updates**

- 4.1 Constabulary response to the demands placed on by the Covid-19 emergency:
- 4.1.1 General Demand – The recent period has seen an expected increase in general levels of calls for service, incidents being created in response to demand and recorded crime. However, the levels of "pre-Covid" demand have yet to be reached and sustained.
- 4.1.2 Domestic Abuse – Levels of domestic abuse remains higher than this time last year, which is akin to the national picture. Whilst the residential environments created as a by-product of necessary lockdown measures may in part have influenced domestic offences, the beginning of rise year *pre-dated* lockdown. This is being managed carefully and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner have recently secured £288k as part of a national fund for domestic abuse and sexual violence services.
- 4.1.3 Initial 12-week debrief of Constabulary Response – A structured debrief of the Constabulary's initial response to the pandemic in the first twelve weeks has recently been completed. A report detailing findings and organisational learning will be made available to the Force Operations Board and also the CPLRF in the next month.
- 4.1.4 "Track and Trace" – The implications of the national "Track and Trace" programme have been considered carefully. A policy has been set working closely to the national guidance. combining this with an on-going programme of Health and Safety in the working environment -and working practices- will help minimise the operational impact of potential isolation of officers and staff where contacted. The Track and Trace policy has been enacted and shown to have been appropriate and effective.
- 4.1.5 Protest and Public Health – The County has seen a number of Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests in the last month. These have been peaceful with no offences disclosed to date. Protest Liaison Officers (PLO) have been active in engaging organisers and groups and seeking to promote social distancing responsibilities both at protest sites, but also with consideration to routes to and dispersal from sites. The balance of facilitating

peaceful demonstration -as a fundamental right- with ensuring public health at a time of a pandemic is challenging and requires pragmatism and sensitivity

4.1.6 Community Impact – The last month has seen continuing changes in the legitimate use of public spaces and opportunities to engage more for some in controlled conditions. There are no notable community tensions relating to the pandemic or policing of it to report.

#### 4.2 Countywide Partnership Arrangements:

4.2.1 The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Resilience Forum (CPLRF) continues to operate effectively. The Constabulary approach of recognising the need for sustain both “Response” and “Recovery” phases concurrently has also been taken by the CPLRF. A strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG) continues to oversee and direct the activity of both phases

4.2.2 How and when the CPLRF moves more significantly into a Recovery approach is being monitored carefully. However, Recovery must always maintain an important element of responding once again to any significant risk changes such as a “second peak” of infection

#### 4.3 Responding to Changes in Enforcement Powers:

4.3.1 The period has seen further changes in legislation and processes as the national picture has changed in response to the pandemic. There is an inevitable risk of both public confusion and a lack of clarity in approach for the police service where legislative changes come quickly -and necessarily- into effect.

4.3.2 A position of maintaining the four “Es” approach of progressive and measured steps before enforcement continues in Cambridgeshire. This has maintained community trust and understanding and remains a proportionate approach; ultimately in pursuit of public health and mitigating risks of infection.

#### 4.4 Operational Capability and Capacity:

4.4.1 The Constabulary remains in a position where staffing level are buoyant and operational capacity and capability remains strong. The “Track and Trace” process (as per 2.1.4) will be monitored carefully, but as detailed there has been a sustained approach of minimising cross-contact within and between teams from early in the response.

4.4.2 Contingency plans remain in place to respond to any increase in absence affecting capability and capacity. These plans are graduated and able to respond to fluctuations to ensure that critical services are identified and sustained, even in the most challenging of resourcing circumstances

#### 4.5 Strategic Risks:

At this time there are no strategic risks requiring the immediate support of the BCB.

#### 4.6 Recovery and Organisational Learning:

4.6.1 Good progress has been made on the Constabulary’s approach to recovery and organisational learning since the last report. The Recovery and Learning Group (RLG) is now established and productive. In addition to the first action of Recovery -the

review and debrief of the Response so far, specified in 2.1.3 above- the following are matters of note:

- 4.6.2 Risk, Issues and Opportunities (RIO) – A comprehensive RIO register has been completed. At the time of writing effective countermeasures have been identified and applied to the more significant risks, with no risk or issue currently assessed as high. However, the RIO register is a living document, being used and assessed daily
- 4.6.3 Embedding Recovery – An efficient approach of seeking to bring matters of recovery into existing Constabulary governance structures and board as soon as it is possible to do so is being taken. This is showing early signs of benefit, with the recovery agenda being widely discussed and evidence of commitment. This approach seeks to avoid the creation of additional, temporary governance arrangements for already busy officers and staff and moves recovery from a risk of being “niche”, to being central to Constabulary business at this unprecedented time
- 4.6.4 Change and Continuous Improvement – The RIO process has identified 61 opportunities for organisational growth and development from the Covid19 experience to date. Of these many are departmental level continuous improvement matters that will be progressed by respective Management Teams.
- 4.6.5 The Force Change Board will oversee some projects of potential complexity and impact: These include the commission of a new review of agile working with potential for sustaining current changes in practices and physical use of estate; opportunities to look again at the Countywide approach to community safety governance and system-wide approaches and projects to capitalise on the excellent work achieved by both the Special Constabulary and volunteers during the pandemic.
- 4.6.6 CPLRF Recovery – The Constabulary retains membership of the CPRF Recovery Co-ordination Group (RCG) and has active members of each of the RCG’s thematic sub-groups

## 5 Next Steps/Recommendation

- 5.1 The Constabulary will continue to manage “Response” and “Recovery” phases to address the pandemic, with a view to passage more into the latter over time. This echoes the wider CPLRF approach

## 6. Recommendation

- 6.1 This paper is submitted for information only.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

|                           |  |
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| <b>Source Document(s)</b> |  |
| <b>Contact Officer(s)</b> | Further information can be provided on the Constabulary’s behalf by T/Supt Steve Kerridge – Op Covid19 – Head of Recovery and Learning |