



## EXTRA-ORDINARY BUSINESS CO-ORDINATION BOARD

### APPROVED MINUTES

**Date:** 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020      **Time:** 16:00

**Location:** Via Microsoft Teams

**Members:**

Ray Bisby	Acting Police and Crime Commissioner
Nick Dean	Chief Constable, Cambridgeshire Constabulary
Jim Haylett	Acting Chief Executive, Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner

**In Attendance:**

Aly Flowers	Head of Compliance, Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner
Catherine Kimberley	Communications & Engagement Manager, Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner
Sarah Sleaford	Chief Constable's Staff Officer, Cambridgeshire Constabulary

#### **1. Welcome and Apologies**

1.1 As this was an Extra-Ordinary Business Co-ordination Board (the "Board") meeting only the attendance of the three Board members, as given above, was required.

#### **2. Declarations of Interest**

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

#### **3. Neighbourhood Policing Change Programme – End of Consultation**

3.1 The Chief Constable introduced this report, the purpose of which was to provide an update to the Board on Cambridgeshire Constabulary's (the "Constabulary") Neighbourhood Policing Change Programme (NPCP) at the conclusion of the staff consultation phase. The report would specifically recap the changes to the Constabulary's Neighbourhood Policing Structure proposed in the four workstreams

of the NPCP; give an update on the progress of the NPCP; and seek feedback from the Board on the change proposals.

3.2 The Chief Constable emphasised that primarily the proposals were predicated on the basis of the financial challenges the Constabulary faced both in the forthcoming financial year and to achieve future financial sustainability in respect of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. Whilst the Government's Grant Settlement for policing is expected to be announced within the next few weeks, the issue of a fairer funding formula for the Constabulary remains. The final details of the settlement are currently unknown, but indications are that it will be a flat cash settlement for forces, aside from the Uplift police officer recruitment funding. Police and Crime Commissioners will be given the ability to raise the policing part of the precept by £15 for a band D property. There are also £120 million of efficiency savings to be made across the police service nationally but it is not clear what that means in terms of local settlement.

3.3 The neighbourhood policing proposals are based on three board areas of change which together will achieve £1.7 million in savings for the 2021/22 financial year and will be recurring thereafter. The proposals were due to be announced earlier in the year but delayed by Covid as the operational impact of Covid was completely unknown. However, whilst clearly Covid remains an operational challenge, the proposals cannot be delayed further due to the financial situation and the need to make these savings beginning in the new financial year.

3.4 The Chief Constable reminded the Board that he provided the detail of the proposed changes to the 28<sup>th</sup> October 2020 Board meeting but thought it would be useful to reiterate the proposals for further discussion and provide additional context given the following agenda item was the Acting Commissioner's report regarding the views and concerns he had received from the public, communities and others, in respect of the proposals.

3.5 The Board agreed that this would be useful, and given that both the Chief Constable's report and the Acting Commissioner's report are intrinsically linked, that both reports should be taken together and discussed under the four broad themes that had been identified from the views raised with the Acting Commissioner. (Therefore, the dialogue is captured in that way as opposed to separately in the minutes).

**4. Theme 1: (referring to paragraph 4 of the Acting Commissioner's report at Agenda Item 4.0) Consideration of the impact of proposals on communities, individuals and overall policing** – The Acting Commissioner referred the Chief Constable to Appendix 1 of his report at Agenda Item 4.0, regarding the views and concerns he had received and asked how will the Chief Constable address these.

4.1 The Chief Constable responded as follows which he hoped would provide both responses to the views and concerns expressed and provide reassurance to the Acting Commissioner.

#### **PCSOs**

4.2 The reduction of PCSOs from 80 to 40 (actual PCSO strength is currently 72), with all having a single role profile and improved alignment to neighbourhood teams

covering all 28 neighbourhoods, with each of these neighbourhoods having a dedicated PCSO to deal with the issues that matter most to the local community.

- 4.3 In 2019, 50 additional police officers were recruited through the precept increase. Between October 2019 and March 2020, an additional 93 officers were recruited (21 part of the Uplift programme), with 37% of joiners being female officers and 8% being from BAME communities. This means the Constabulary has its highest ever number of warranted police officers. Between March 2020-March 2021, the Constabulary will have recruited 159 new officers including 41 from the Uplift programme. The Chief Constable stated his on-going commitment to neighbourhood policing, something that he had originally been committed to since he joined the Constabulary in 2018.
- 4.4 Whilst the Chief Constable agreed that a reduction of 40 PCSOs would have some impact, the realignment of existing PCSOs into neighbourhood teams would provide more effective community support and improved supervision. Officers and PCSOs work closely together in neighbourhood communities, but warranted officers have more powers available to them to use more flexibly. On average PCSOs account for just under 2,000 intelligence submissions into the force per year out of 30,000 from across the force.
- 4.5 There will be one PCSO for each of the 28 neighbourhoods across the county, with additional resource allocation based on criteria of crime volume, crime harm and vulnerability location index. The underlying principles of the new apportionment is PCSO representation in all of the neighbourhoods, all of whom will have one refreshed role profile in line with the National Role Profile, a revised shift pattern that is more closely aligned to the officers within the boundaries of the PCSO deployment model, and will foster integration through more frequent team working with direct reporting to a neighbourhood policing Sergeant. The District Commanders will have the discretion and ability to be flexible as to how they balance the resources across the neighbourhoods when required to meet need.
- 4.6 The on-costs (including salary, pension and national insurance contributions), of a PCSO is £37,855 per year when compared to £34,310 per year for a warranted police officer, so for the first five years of service a warranted police officer costs less than a PCSO.
- 4.7 The money from the Government for the uplift in new officers, whilst welcomed, is ringfenced and consequently cannot be used for anything else other than for those new police officers. It cannot be used for retaining PCSOs or other staff who are part of these proposals or lessening budget deficits.
- 4.8 In respect of dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) the investment and realignment of the Community Action Teams and Community Impact Teams into Neighbourhood Support teams will enhance neighbourhood policing. The work currently undertaken by PCSOs in respect of ASB and crime prevention should not be adversely affected. There will be more warranted officers in the Neighbourhood teams who have extra powers available to them to tackle ASB by obtaining Community Behaviour Orders, Dispersal Orders, Public Safety Protection Orders, and Warrants, which will be a focus of the Neighbourhood Teams and Neighbourhood Support Team.
- 4.9 In respect of retaining knowledge and experience, the Chief Constable has encouraged PCSOs wishing to be recruited as warranted officers to apply through

the national police officer recruitment process, which is a mandatory process. Should they be successful as part of that process, the Chief Constable has earmarked 18 spaces on one of the police officer training intake programmes next year. Following the training they would then have the choice to be redeployed back into their previous neighbourhoods so their knowledge is maintained.

#### **Community Safety Officers**

- 4.10 The removal of the Community Safety Officer (CSO) role would result in the reduction of seven posts across the force.
- 4.11 There would be a redistribution of the CSO essential activities to other areas within the Constabulary. There is added support and investment into the Partnership and Operations Team, led by an Inspector who will be responsible for Hate Crime, all the Watch Schemes, Special Constabulary and Police Service Volunteers. This team will work closely with the Neighbourhood Teams and crime prevention support and advice will be coordinated by this central team.

#### **Enquiry Offices**

- 4.12 The closure of nine Enquiry Offices and a reduction of Enquiry Officers from 17 to 11. Public Enquiry Offices will be at Thorpe Wood and Parkside Police Stations which will provide a seven day a week provision. Additionally, the Peterborough City Centre office will remain under the current arrangements. The Chief Constable is relocating other officers, currently based at Headquarters, to outlying police stations to provide people in each local authority area with an appointment-based service to allow members of the public to make an appointment to speak to an officer.

#### **Citizens in Policing**

- 4.13 The remodelling of the Citizens in Policing Team, including the removal of the Head of Citizens in Policing and Special Constabulary post (which is currently vacant).
- 4.14 The Chief Constable stated that the Constabulary are committed to all Watch Schemes, and to engaging with the community regarding these.

#### **Continued Professional Development**

- 4.15 The creation of Area Command Cells, Neighbourhood Support Teams, and Continuous Professional Development Units to support officers with ongoing operational competence and training now and into the future to deliver consistent and efficient neighbourhood policing across the whole force.

5. **Theme 2:** (*referring to paragraph 5 of the Acting Commissioner's report at Agenda Item 4.0*) **What engagement activity has taken place by the Chief** – The Acting Commissioner asked the Chief Constable to clarify the extent of external engagement activity, and what has the feedback been and how does the Chief Constable propose to respond.

- 5.1 The Chief Constable responded as follows which he hoped would provide both responses to the views and concerns expressed and provide reassurance to the Acting Commissioner.
- 5.2 The Chief Constable led the staff engagement and consultation on the day of the announcement, supported by the Constabulary's Head of Corporate Communications, and a Human Resources representative. This was done virtually (due to Covid) across nine locations across the force, with line managers and Unison

representation supporting staff affected. Prior to the announcement, the Chief Constable had met with Unison on a confidential basis to arrange the support. He had also provided a briefing to the Police Federation, the Superintendents' Association, and the Neighbourhood Sergeants, in order that the welfare of those affected by the proposals could be looked after.

- 5.3 Externally he had carried out engagement with the Acting Commissioner and the OPCC. He had briefed all Chief Executive Officers of the local authorities within the county, having also ascertained how best to engage with their political leaders, and in response to this they were provided with an information pack to undertake that engagement. On the day of the announcement all MPs were invited to attend a briefing with four assistants attending or sending representatives, and then this was subsequently followed up by a briefing to all.
- 5.4 A press release was sent to all of the county's local media, with extensive coverage locally in the press, social media, television, and radio.
- 5.5 Information was put on the Constabulary's website and on its social media channels, with monitoring of the rates of views of the channels showing the extensive engagement reach. There were also two public statements from the Acting Commissioner. The Chief Constable also attended a virtual meeting between the Acting Commissioner and local MPs.
- 5.6 The Chief Constable has had two further meetings with Unison since the announcement with no issues raised. No MPs or political leaders had made contact with him directly in response to his offer to provide them with a personal briefing.
- 5.7 He concluded that he felt satisfied with the level and extensive reach of the engagement that he had undertaken and that had been communicated.
6. **Theme 3: (referring to paragraph 6 of the Acting Commissioner's report at Agenda Item 4.0) Evidence Base for the proposal** – the Acting Commissioner had asked at the October Board meeting whether an Equality Impact Assessment had been done with regards to the proposals given that low attendance at Enquiry Offices was referenced at that meeting and had asked if the Chief Constable could look at actual data and confirm whether this can be published. The Acting Commissioner would be grateful for any assessment about how the closure of Enquiry Offices and reduction of staff from 17 to 11 might impact communities, specifically those without an open enquiry desk, and for example, how easy will it be to get an appointment and what will be the criteria for these.
  - 6.1 The Chief Constable could understand the communities concern regarding the closure of Enquiry Offices but he gave his assurance that no police station would close, with some stations getting more officers, for example the stationing of the Neighbourhood Support Teams both at Cambourne and Thorpe Wood Police Stations.
  - 6.2 Public Enquiry Offices will be at Thorpe Wood and Parkside Police Stations, which will provide a seven day a week provision. Additionally, Peterborough City Centre enquiry desk remains open as per the current arrangements. Police stations will remain open with yellow phones outside.
  - 6.3 Whilst no footfall data on the public use of Enquiry Offices, they tend to be used by the public for four main reasons: custody; enquiries over stolen or returned

property; attendance of Registered Sex Offenders in order to comply with notification requirements; and foreign national registration.

- 6.4 An appointment system will be in place whereby the public can contact the Constabulary's Demand Hub to book an appointment to see a warranted police officer at one of the rural police stations. Equally, if someone contacts the Demand Hub for an appointment they will be asked at that point if they wish to discuss their matter for the Demand Hub to try to resolve there and then.
- 6.5 The yellow phones at Enquiry Offices will be still be in use and anyone who uses these will be put through to the Demand Hub for them to either deal with or for them to directly contact an officer or staff member within that Enquiry Office for them to go out to meet the person. The Chief Constable took an action to report back to the Acting Commissioner on data showing the frequency of use of the yellow phones and also provide clarification as to the sanitisation of the phones.
- 6.6 Over the last 12 months there had been a demonstrable channel shift and increase in how the public has made contact with the Constabulary through the use of on-line reporting and webchat, with a 12% and 60% increase respectively. There are now nearly 100 webchats per day, with an average 30 second response time, with feedback of 88% saying the system was easy to use, and over 90% agreeing that their enquiry or task had been completed to their satisfaction.
- 6.7 Although there would be closure of some of the Enquiry Offices, any space that consequently may become available would be looked at as part of the Constabulary's estates programme.

#### **Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

- 6.8 An EIA had been started from the beginning of the consultation programme and had been set against internal and external factors such as the diversity of the organisation and community concerns. The EIA is a live and evolving document which is being continually updated by the Human Resources Team and will be updated once the final decision on the proposals has been made. It will be made publicly available on the Constabulary's website.
- 6.9 As a percentage of the total staff affected by this change programme the BME cohort is 6.93%. In order to mitigate any barriers to BME staff the Constabulary have put a number of measures in place, as follows:
- Aspiration process to consider applications for voluntary redundancy to prevent unnecessary de-selection processes wherever possible;
  - Fair and consistent selection process with consistency of panel make up to ensure rigor and also to prevent bias;
  - Blended selection process comprising of a mixture of paper based and interview to give people the best chances of demonstrating their full potential;
  - Opportunity to make any reasonable adjustments to the process as part of the aspiration process in order that no one is disadvantaged, for example, a request for extra time for someone who is dyslexic or a reader/audio briefing for someone where English is not their first language.

7. **Theme 4: (referring to paragraph 7 of the Acting Commissioner's report at Agenda Item 4.0) Monitoring of the impact and how the Acting Commissioner will hold to account once a decision has been made.** Once a decision has been reached, the

Acting Commissioner will monitor the impact on communities including the effectiveness of engagement about proposed changes. How will the Chief Constable monitor the impact of any changes and review the implementation.

- 7.1 The Chief Constable confirmed that there would be a post-implementation review undertaken and this would be reported through the Board in due course. There are also other measures that will act as performance indicators as to the impact of the proposals, such as public confidence and public satisfaction, which are ordinarily reported through the Board.
- 7.2 The Chief Constable has also asked Bedfordshire Police to undertake a peer review of the two Enquiry Office model to ensure there is enough resilience.

## **8. Conclusion**

- 8.1 The Acting Commissioner thanked the Chief Constable and stated that he felt reassured that the Chief Constable had provided adequate responses to the views and concerns given in his report.
- 8.2 The Chief Constable informed the Board of the forthcoming timescales regarding the proposals: Force Executive Board on 14<sup>th</sup> December; internal communications on 15<sup>th</sup> December; detail regarding reallocation of PCSOs early in the new year.

## **9. Actions arising from the meeting**

- 9.1 The Board noted the following actions arising as a result of their discussions:
- Chief Constable to publish Equality Impact Assessment once complete.
  - Chief Constable to ascertain the availability of footfall data into Enquiry Offices, the use of the yellow phone, and whether the phones would be sanitised.
  - Chief Constable to discuss with his head of Corporate Communications regarding the content of his media announcement regarding the outcomes of the consultation and his final decision on the proposals.



Ray Bfsby