



**STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD**

**Notes of meeting held on Tuesday 7 November  
Main Conference room (G2), Lloyd House**

**Present:**

- David Jamieson - Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
- Ashley Bertie - Senior Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner (SAPCC)
- David Thompson - Chief Constable
- Louisa Rolfe - Deputy Chief Constable
- Sarah Boycott - Assistant Chief Constable
- Alex Murray - Assistant Chief Constable
- Sally Bourner - Chief Superintendent
- Christopher Todd - Chief Superintendent
- Ernie Hendricks - Board Member
- Brendan Connor - Board Member
- Gurinder Josan - Board Member
- Dr Sarah Marwick - Board Member
- Waheed Saleem - Board Member
- Cllr Liam Preece - Board Member
- Jonathan Jardine - Chief Executive
- Mark Kenyon - Chief Finance Officer
- Stuart Gardner - Organisational Performance
- Ali Layne-Smith - People & Organisation Development
- Emma Cooper - Business Transformation

9 observers  
1 note taker

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| <b>127/18</b> | The Commissioner welcomed everyone to the meeting.  |
| <b>127/19</b> | <b>Item 1 – Conflicts of Interest</b><br>There were no conflicts of interest declared.  |
| <b>127/20</b> | <b>Item 2 – Apologies</b><br>Apologies were received from APCC Dr Lynnette Kelly and Board Member Dr Cath Hannon.   |
| <b>127/21</b> | <b>Item 3 – Notes of last meeting</b><br>The minutes included information from the Chief Constable concerning search warrants requested at 91/17 and 102/17. Brendan Connor agreed to review the information and would follow up directly with any further questions.<br><br>The minutes were accepted. |

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| 127/22 | <p><b>Item 4 – Acceptance of Petitions</b><br/>There were no petitions received.</p>   |
| 127/23 | <p><b>Item 5 – Public Questions</b><br/>There was one question from a member of the public.</p> <p>Mr Joiner was introduced to the board and his question was asked by the PCC:</p> <p><i>What is the PCC's office doing to review the lack of services/resources which appears as a growing feature as a result of the current structure?</i></p> <p>The PCC said he welcomed questions from the public and apologised for not being able to webcast the meeting. He stated the Board could not deal with individual cases but can address general matters.</p> <p>The Chief Constable and Commissioner noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This is a challenging time for the Force. 3 years of budget cuts have resulted in the Force having fewer officers than ever</li> <li>- To be able to work within the budget, it was necessary to find new ways of working whilst being as effective as possible</li> <li>- New technology is taking time from officers having to travel back to stations to input data. It is too early to quantify this, but objective analysis is to come later</li> <li>- The current projection is that by the end of year the Force will lose another 200 officers</li> <li>- The previous structure was financially unsustainable, though they have tried to safeguard Neighbourhood Officers and PCSOs</li> <li>- There is more demand on the organisation with a significant uplift of calls for service (20% up from last year).</li> <li>- Responding to service attendance times have become challenging, and Neighbourhood Teams are under resourced</li> <li>- The online reporting facility has had a positive impact</li> <li>- Productivity of Response policing has been lifted, but capacity gains have been offset by the rise in crime</li> <li>- More resources can be allocated to Response, but the Force would not be able to deliver prevention work</li> <li>- It has been a challenging year, but this was not unique to the West Midlands</li> </ul> <p>The Chief Constable offered to look into the specific issues associated with the case Mr Joiner raised.</p> |
| 127/24 | <p><b>Item 6 – Questions from the Board on matters not on the agenda</b><br/><u>Question 1 asked by Ernie Hendricks</u><br/>Would the Chief constable confirm that 96% of respondents from the Pay &amp; Morale survey felt that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Morale in West Midlands Police (WMP) was low</li> <li>b) what measures have been put in place since the report was released three months ago to address the problem and;</li> <li>c) offer some commentary in relation to the factors that contribute to low morale based on the table?</li> </ol> <p>The Chief Constable responded as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Since being Chief Constable the social contract around policing has been prioritised</li> <li>- Several national surveys have highlighted stress on officers</li> </ul>   |

- The survey took place in a period of change this year
- Agrees that people are stretched and recognises that other Forces are in the same position

Ali Layne-Smith made the following comments:

- WMP have run their own staff survey, and there was a 40% response rate giving a good indication of how staff feel
- There is now a dedicated post to develop strategy on staff motivation. This post has been in operation for a month so there are no results yet
- Resources and staffing issues have been identified
- The target is to recruit 280 officers of which 209 have been recruited so far
- PCSOs, Special Constables and transferees have also been recruited
- There is an on-going commitment to professional development, making learning opportunities available to staff
- The Force has looked at the following areas:
  - Workload and responsibilities
  - How to can get people back to work
  - Changes to the promotions process to recruit from current employees
  - Reinvesting in Occupational Health

Question 2 asked by Waheed Saleem

Can the Chief Constable set out the number of unsolved crimes in the West Midlands and the number attributed to the victim's unwillingness to cooperate with police investigations?

ACC Alex Murray responded as follows:

- The number of detections has remained approximately the same, but crime rates are increasing, meaning that the detection rate has declined to about 20%
- In about 10% of cases, victims do not want to proceed, but it is unfair to say that the witness is unwilling to cooperate. Some people may be under coercive control
- Where are concerns around domestic violence, the Force will look at evidence without witness cooperation

The Board Asked the following questions:

- How do you provide support for victims who are unwilling to cooperate?
- Can we have a breakdown of the effects when victims don't come forwards?

ACC Alex Murray described some of the support available, including as part of the court process:

- Specialist provision for young and/or vulnerable people
- Use of screens and video-links where intimidation may be taking place
- The standards set by the Victims' Code

Question 3 asked by PCC David Jamieson

Can the Chief Constable comment on concerns raised by Independent Custody Visitors that staffing levels at some custody sites are at times inadequate and that This is having an impact on detainees?

The Chief Constable responded as follows:

- Noting the value of the ICV service, the Chief noted the improvements in the quality of the custody estate
- Inspectors and Sergeants actively manage safe staffing levels, and custody remains a very safe environment

- Willing to review instances where concerns were raised

The PCC reiterated that Custody Visitors do an excellent job.

Question 4 asked by Gurinder Singh Josan

Can the Chief Constable confirm whether:

- a. WMP has utilised the services of Randox Testing Services to carry out forensic testing including blood testing?
- b. Are there any WMP investigations caught up in the alleged falsifying of tests?
- c. How many cases are involved; how is the issue being addressed and has there been any additional financial cost to the Force?

The Chief Constable responded as follows:

- There is an on-going investigation of the supplier conducting the forensic tests
- Forensics is part of a national change programme
- Service provision is dependent on private suppliers, in part to ensure independence.

ACC Alex Murray commented as follows:

- The problem with the outsourcing company is that scientists were failing to use new control samples to test blood
- WMP is less affected than other Forces
- There are 238 WMP cases, none of which have required re-testing so far, out of about 10,000 nationally.
- So far, no retesting has led to a conviction being unsound

Question 5 asked by Gurinder Singh Josan

Would the Chief Constable make a statement about the reasons why:

- a. Recent published figures show an increase in recorded hate crimes of 29% in the 2016/2017 financial year over the previous year?
- b. What has been the impact within the West Midlands Force area and what steps are being taken to address this?
- c. Does the Chief Constable have figures in relation to arrests and convictions for hate crimes in the force area?

Assistant Chief Constable Alex Murray responded as follows:

- There has been an 11% rise in the West Midlands
- Up to 90% hate crime is not reported
- WMP has one of the best prosecution and guilty rates in the country
- Effort is being put into trying to encourage people to report hate crime so that people have trust that the police will act
- There have been spikes in hate crime after terrorist attacks, including in July and August 2017. Since then, rates have steadied, albeit at a higher level

The Board asked for figures related to arrests and convictions and were informed that in 2016/17 4000 hate crimes were reported and there was a 90% conviction rate. WMP ranks above other similar forces for convictions.

The PCC commented as follows:

- He is proud of being part of such a diverse region where people generally get on with each other.

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|        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A tiny proportion of people commit hates crime</li> <li>- It is important that hate crime is treated with seriousness.</li> </ul> <p><u>Question 6 asked by Gurinder Singh Josan</u><br/>Can the Chief Constable outline what lessons have been drawn by the Force from the recently published Race Disparity Audit and the related Ethnicity Facts and Figures website across all the areas relating to the work of the Force but particularly in the areas of crime, policing and criminal justice? Does the Force have any future plans in relation to the information contained in this study?</p> <p>The Chief Constable welcomed the Race Disparity Audit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It supports and validates the Fairness in Policing, recognising that confidence in policing is generally lower for BAME people</li> <li>- It shows that these variations are not just apparent in policing, and indeed the issues faced by policing are linked to outcomes in other parts of the public sector</li> <li>- It highlighted some of the complexities associated with Stop and Search recording, in particular relating to proposals to begin recording s163 road traffic stops. He noted that a national position is not yet set.</li> </ul> <p>Ali Layne-Smith commented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The report flagged that there is a broader range of diversity within the voluntary sector</li> <li>- There are positive lessons around how we can attract under-represented groups</li> </ul> <p>The PCC highlighted the recent Lammy report which highlighted the West Midlands Turning Point project. He added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nearly 30% of the new cohorts going through are from minority communities<br/>This figure was at 10% 3 years ago</li> <li>- It was refreshing to see the cadets were coming from minority communities</li> </ul> |
| 127/25 | <p><b>Item 7 – Financial Monitoring 2017/18</b><br/>Mark Kenyon presented the main points of the report.</p> <p>The Board asked the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is there enough flexibility in the budget to accommodate an overspend?</li> <li>- What equipment did the £103k overspend relate to?</li> </ul> <p>Mark Kenyon responded that the success of WMP2020 is crucial; projects need to achieve the anticipated benefits. He agreed to provide information on the equipment overspend</p>   |

127/26

**Item 8 - Performance Report**

CC went through the main points of report.

The Board:

- Noted significant increases in burglary and robbery, and discussed the overlap between burglary and theft of motor vehicles. The Board raised car-jacking.
- In Solihull people are relating the rise in crime to reductions in police officers
- Discussed coordination between the CID, the NCA and the Regional Organised Crime Unit

The Deputy Chief Constable responded:

- There is a connection between populations with high value vehicles the rise in of vehicle crime in those areas. Arrests have been made. One or two offenders have been responsible for a spree of car key robbery and carjacking
- She provided information concerning the rate of recovery of vehicles. There is no evidence of cars being shipped out of the UK but there is evidence of "chop shops" and false number plates being attached in order to commit other crimes.
- Work is being done with ROCU in terms of understanding vehicle crime, carjacking and robbery

The Chief Constable responded:

- Theft of newer, more modern vehicles is increasing
- The risk and threat in Solihull is being treated as a priority by the Force
- This is a national problem, but rates are higher in the West Midlands
- This particular trend is different as it is organised crime, and poses a threat to residents

The PCC commented lower value vehicles with keyless entry are also being targeted. 25% of these are smaller Ford cars, and very few are recovered. New safety measures are being put on newer cars, but manufacturers cannot absolve themselves from responsibility for the cars they have sold previously

The Board commented on public perceptions of the response to calls for service.

The Chief Constable responded:

- Contact and Response performance is closely monitored
- Immediate response performance is good
- Performance in less urgent cases is not always as quick as the public would like. Where there are forensic opportunities, the response is quicker.

The Board noted:

- The excellent work associated with Operation Sceptre
- The number of days to finalise PSD investigations and resolutions, and asked when performance will improve, and how many cases take longer than the average amount of time to complete

The Deputy Chief Constable replied:

- There is sometimes a lack of confidence amongst local supervisors to acknowledge poor performance and correct them sooner
- She would find the number of cases which are taking a long time to solve and respond back to Board
- WMP has a smaller PSD pro rota compared to other Forces
- PSD are ensuring that supervisors are competent in making decisions. A great majority of complainants just want an apology and things to be put right

127/28

**Item 9 - Access to Services**

The DCC presented paper.

The Board asked questions about:

- The "channel shift" for Contact
- Managing demand peaks and absenteeism

The Deputy Chief Constable replied:

- The public has more choice in accessing services
- The targets for answering and despatching officers in response to 999 calls will remain
- The 101 performance targets are arbitrary and need reviewing

Chief Superintendent Sally Bourner made the following comments:

- Everyone recognises that the work of Force Contact is challenging and does have an impact on people
- Around 10% of the department at any one time is not at work, and they are working hard now to maintain a stable workforce
- They are prioritising attendance and well-being
- Support is given to colleagues who are on sick leave, and help given to return to work
- Mental health support and wider wellbeing are part of the management approach
- With regards to annual leave a clear set of principles from individual responsibility to supervisors' responsibility has been developed

The Board asked about P1-P3 performance and the risk to public confidence.

The DCC responded:

- Performance to calls for service relating to burglary or robbery was consistent
- Where there are forensic opportunities, officers should attend as quickly as possible
- Updates are received every day on how many live calls are coming into the contact centre
- There are a number of crimes that they can now investigate over the phone i.e. bilking
- There is a risk and vulnerability based assessment of investigatory opportunities
- A Gold Group was run throughout the summer to deal with spikes in demand
- This spike along with the terrorist attacks meant there were fewer resources
- Some officers came out of their roles to work as response officers during the spike in demand
- Mission Support teams are tasked on a daily basis about DV calls

The Board noted and discussed the abandoned call rates.

Chief Superintendent Sally Bourner:

- It is not currently technically possible to track post-abandoned calls
- Website traffic, for people seeking information and reporting crimes, is increasing
- 101 callers can be guided towards other contact channels
- 101 abandoned calls may lead to an increase in 999 calls

The Chief Constable noted that Contact performance has stabilised and WMP performance is improving more quickly than national comparator.

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| <p><b>127/29</b></p> | <p><b>Item 10 - Confidence and Satisfaction</b><br/> Ashley Bertie Chaired this item and the Deputy Chief Constable presented the report.</p> <p>The Board asked about the collection of baseline data.</p> <p>ACC Sarah Boycott responded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 7000 responses had been received in three weeks, and an evaluation of the demographic mix is underway</li> <li>- 150 responses were received via Facebook and Twitter from people not subscribed to WMNow</li> </ul> <p>The Chief Constable noted that the Force is planning to survey people for whom English is not their first language.</p> <p>The Board asked about 'survey fatigue'. The Deputy Chief Constable recognised this issue and said it was part of planning. The intention was to reduce, rather than increase, the number of questions asked.</p> <p>Jonathan Jardine commented on the Active Citizens Fund:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An Internal Audit found acceptable levels of control in financial processes and had made useful recommendations about safeguarding</li> <li>- An OPCC review had recommended more tightly focused terms of reference that concentrated on crime and disorder reduction, recognising the risk that projects could be funded which, while worthy, are not aligned to community safety outcomes.</li> <li>- Development of ACF objectives and practice will occur in the Active Citizens Sub-group</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>127/30</b></p> | <p><b>Item 11 - Body Worn Cameras (BWC)</b><br/> Chief Superintendent Chris Todd presented the paper:</p> <p>The Board asked about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The linkage between the underspend and operational practice</li> <li>- What will happen to the underspend</li> <li>- The amount of data being stored</li> <li>- Digital transfer of video evidence to CPS</li> </ul> <p>Chief Superintendent Todd responded as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The underspend will return to the WMP2020 budget</li> <li>- Camera activation is increasing; Officers are guided that they should switch on the camera in the same circumstances in which they would be making a record in a pocket notebook</li> <li>- Members of the public would not expect every interaction with police to be recorded, but officers should make that judgement themselves in most cases</li> <li>- In cases of Domestic Violence, officers should record as this would give the best chances of achieving a result</li> <li>- BWC gives officers the ability to record stop and search encounters and every officer would be expected to record these</li> <li>- There has been some consideration around BWC in terms of privacy rights</li> <li>- The Met has been liaising with the Information Commissioner and confirmed that the current use does satisfy the ICO</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- With regards to the burning of discs, the Force is liaising with CPS to see when</li> </ul> |

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|        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- they can progress this. One of the challenges has been to provide a vehicle where the CPS can view information on their systems without having to switch to a different system</li> <li>- Changes are due to be made to the Force systems and at that stage they will know how soon the digital transfer process can begin</li> </ul> <p>The Chief Constable made the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He thanked Chief Superintendent Todd for the work which has been done</li> <li>- The benefits are huge, and most officers really want this</li> </ul> <p>The SAPCC said that due to the work done with BWC, more people are being charged with domestic violence offences. He also congratulated Chief Superintendent Todd on the work.</p> |
| 127/31 | <p><b>Item 12 - Strategic Policing and Crime Board Workplan</b></p> <p>Jonathan Jardine reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meetings in 2018 are taking place on the third Tuesday of each month, instead of the first</li> <li>- The agendas will be in three parts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Police and Crime Plan</li> <li>- Standing items</li> <li>- Emerging items</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |
| 127/32 | <p><b>Item 13 - Chief Constable's Update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Issues with "ride outs" on Halloween and Bonfire Night have required a large Force effort in previous years</li> <li>- Proactive enforcement led to fewer nuisance call outs</li> <li>- Gun crime in parts of the city is still quite substantial, and he wanted to confirm the determination of Force in bringing people to justice. There has been some great work in this area.</li> <li>- Two officers were deliberately run down on Saturday in Wolverhampton. The officers have not suffered serious injury</li> </ul> <p>The SAPCC conveyed well wishes to the officers on behalf of PCC's office. He Highlighted the challenging work being carried out by officers, and thanked the Chief Constable and his staff.</p>   |

The meeting closed at 13:02