

MINUTES of the meeting of the **SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL** held at 10.30 am on 24 November 2020, remotely via Microsoft Teams.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Panel at its next meeting.

Members:

(*Present)

- *Councillor Andrew Povey
- *Councillor David Reeve (Chairman)
- *Councillor Victor Lewanski
- *Councillor Hazel Watson (Vice-Chairman)
- *Councillor Fiona White
- *Councillor John Furey
- *Councillor John Robini
- *Councillor Will Forster
- *Councillor Josephine Hawkins
- *Councillor Christine Elmer
- *Councillor Bernie Spoor
- *Councillor Bob Milton
- *Mr Philip Walker
- *Mr Martin Stilwell

56/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

No apologies had been received.

57/20 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING [Item 2]

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2020 were agreed as a true record of that meeting.

58/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

There were none.

59/20 PUBLIC QUESTIONS [Item 4]

One question was received from Paul Kennedy (District Councillor - Mole Valley District Council). The response can be found attached to these minutes as Annex A.

A supplementary question was asked by Paul Kennedy and the response can be found below.

- *Supplementary question asked by Paul Kennedy:*

The questioner asked the Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) if it was his policy during the pandemic to deter or at least discourage people from using the 101 service.

See Annex B – for full written supplementary question and additional information.

Response:

The PCC emphasised that it was neither the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner's (OPCC) nor Surrey Police's policy to discourage people from using the 101 service, as members of the public are urged to get in touch with the OPCC and Surrey Police through any means which they felt comfortable.

He added that if residents chose to call the Contact Centre, the call operator would suggest at the beginning of call that the resident could submit their query online as that might be an easier method for the resident; especially as online chats could be recorded straight away as calls needed to be transcribed. He explained that the best way to contact Surrey Police was the best way for residents.

He echoed the fantastic job that staff in the Contact Centre were continuing to do, noting that at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic the Contact Centre had been split into six centres and at present that had reduced to two.

It was agreed that a written answer would be provided to the questioner, to answer the additional information provided (Annex B).

60/20 SURREY POLICE GROUP FINANCIAL REPORT FOR MONTH SIX FINANCIAL YEAR 2020/21 [Item 5]

Witnesses:

Kelvin Menon - Chief Finance Officer and Treasurer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)

Alison Bolton - Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)

David Munro - Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. The Chief Finance Officer and Treasurer (OPCC) noted that the report covered the first six months of the financial year and a prediction of the outturn for the end of the year. At present the underspend was predicted at £0.7 million and that was after absorbing £2.3 million of Covid-19 costs.
2. He explained that the largest variances related to wages and salaries, with a predicted overspend at the end of the year of £3.1 million due to the phasing of police officer pay, officer and staff overtime and £1.8 million of that overspend was due to increased agency costs as for example thirty investigative assistants had been recruited.
3. He noted that recruitment in relation to the precept increase and uplift was on track.
4. He noted that Covid-19 costs totalled £5.8 million and of that, £3.5 million had been reimbursed; £3.1 million had been reimbursed for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and £400,000 reimbursed for Covid-19 Surge Funding and another £260,000 had been claimed for income loss for April-July - although that had not yet been received. He added that no money to cover additional staffing or overtime had been received from the government.
5. Regarding capital he noted the forecasted £2.5 million underspend, however only £3.5 million had been spent within the actual 2020/21

spend against the total budget of £17 million, so he expected that the underspend would be larger by the end of the year as some projects were scheduled to span over two years.

6. A Panel member noted that in the original costs there was reference to the STORM system and asked whether that was a replacement for the NICHE system or if it was an additional cost. In response, the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer (OPCC) explained that STORM was a different system to both EQUIP and NICHE; as it related to call handling and the Contact Centre - a more detailed answer would be provided.
7. A Panel member understood that the data collecting system on rural crime via flagging on NICHE had not worked effectively and as a result there was a re-training programme so that officers understood what a rural crime was and when to flag it. He asked whether the new STORM system could integrate rural crime flagging. In response, the PCC explained that rural crime could be flagged on NICHE, Surrey Police's main crime recording system, he noted that police officers were encouraged to report rural crime but the problem was deciding when a rural crime was a rural crime or just a crime that happened in a rural setting. Flagging rural crimes was a matter of judgement for police officers on the ground and he noted that there had been specific training for police officers. A more detailed answer would be provided on the link between STORM and NICHE regarding rural crime flagging.

Councillor John Robini joined the meeting at 10.41 am

8. A Panel member sought clarification on the wages and salaries table which reported an £8 million overspend year-to-date which was to reduce to approximately £3.1 million by year-end and queried whether that reduction was a result of various grants. In response, the Chief Finance Officer and Treasurer (OPCC) explained that wages and salaries were overspent at present due to the timings of actual and forecasted expenditure, and that the reduction of the figure was covered by various grants and number of recharges and savings in other areas.

Mr Philip Walker joined the meeting at 10.44 am

9. A Panel member queried the larger percentage increase in overtime for police staff as opposed to police officers. In response, the Chief Finance Officer and Treasurer (OPCC) explained that police overtime was larger at £5 million compared to £1.5 million for police staff. He confirmed that the percentage increase was larger for police staff and suspected that it was as a result of staff covering certain tasks that police officers would normally do - to enable police officers to be out on the frontline and he would follow up on the matter.
 - The Panel member added that problem with bringing in temporary staff was that it was difficult to cut back on the accustomed workload.
 - In response, the PCC explained that the force had been watching overtime for the last few years in order to reduce the budget, some overtime was necessary to cover fluctuations in operational activity. He added that the force had a policy of having a vacancy rate, which meant that when staff left, they were not automatically replaced.
10. A Panel member queried the Covid-19 costs, particularly the figures in the table which showed that 'other local costs' at £2.6 million were

greater than 'national PPE' costs of £2.2 million which seemed odd. In response, the Chief Finance Officer and Treasurer (OPCC) explained that the 'national PPE' costs related to the PPE that Surrey Police purchased to help with the national effort which went into the national pool of PPE to be distributed amongst national forces and was reimbursed by the government. Whereas 'other local costs' included staffing, overtime and lost income as a result of Covid-19, whilst 'local PPE' was the cost in relation to the purchased PPE for Surrey's use.

- The Panel member queried if the 'other local costs' figure of £2.6 million was therefore double stated, as there was a separate table of police officer and staff overtime. In response, the Chief Finance Officer and Treasurer (OPCC) explained that the costs were not double stated, he had simply collated all the Covid-19 costs into one table which for 'other local costs' would include police officer and staff overtime specifically in relation to Covid-19, amongst other costs.

RESOLVED:

The Police and Crime Panel noted the report.

Actions/further information to be provided:

1. **R36/20** - A more detailed answer on what the STORM system will be provided as well as whether rural crime flagging in NICHE could be integrated into STORM.
2. **R37/20** - Further detail will be provided on the reasons for the larger percentage increase in staff overtime compared to that for police officers.

61/20 OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER MONTH SIX FINANCIAL UPDATE 2020/21 AND ESTIMATE FOR YEAR END OUTTURN [Item 6]

Witnesses:

Kelvin Menon - Chief Finance Officer & Treasurer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. The Chief Finance Officer and Treasurer (OPCC) highlighted the estimated year end outturn with an underspend of just under £8,000, adding that the OPCC was on budget.

RESOLVED:

The Police and Crime Panel noted the financial performance of the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Surrey for the nine-month period ending 30th September 2020.

Actions/further information to be provided:

None.

62/20 POLICE AND CRIME PLAN 2018-2021 - PROGRESS [Item 7]

Witnesses:

David Munro - Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. The PCC noted that he was pleased with the Police and Crime Plan's progress, despite the disruption caused by Covid-19.
2. Panel members raised concerns on the Plan's performance measures:
 - A Panel member disagreed with the PCC's optimism as he highlighted that each of the Plan's performance measures for 2020/21 to date were worse than the baseline 2015/16 figures. For example, the 'Positive Outcome Rate for crimes against vulnerable people' had dropped by 50%. He queried why every single performance measure had worsened.
 - In response, the PCC noted that the statement that the performance measures had worsened was inaccurate, as for example the following performance measures: '% of public from survey believing that the police deal with antisocial behaviour and crimes that matter in their area', '% of victims of crime surveyed satisfied with police service' and '% people who feel confident in neighbourhood police' had all improved in 2020/21 to date compared to 2019/20 figures.
 - Regarding the 2015/16 baseline figures, the PCC noted that it had taken forces a long time to recover from successive budget cuts by the government and was pleased that since the baseline, increased government funding would hopefully lead to an increase in the performance measures.
 - A Panel member noted concern with the 50% drop regarding the 'Positive Outcome Rate for crimes against vulnerable people', particularly as Covid-19 had exacerbated crimes against vulnerable people and sought an explanation for the decrease. In response, the PCC stressed that he was unsatisfied with the positive outcome rate and efforts were being made to address that, for example through the Prevention and Problem Solving Team. He added that the country had been in turmoil as a result of Covid-19 and so to be cautious when drawing conclusions from the 2020/21 figures.
 - As a result of the decrease in percentages of the performance measures since the 2015/16 baseline, Panel members noted that they struggled with the recommendation to note the progress made against the Plan particularly as the 'Positive Outcome Rate for crimes against vulnerable people' had halved. In response to the recommendation, Panel members suggested that the Panel should express its concern on the lack of progress and ask the PCC to report back in more detail on the improvements and the Chief Constable's new plan to address the matter.
 - In response, the PCC agreed that the low 'Positive Outcome Rate for crimes against vulnerable people' was a concern and that the rate for all crimes needed improving. He explained that there had been steady progress on the performance measures since the restructuring of Surrey Police five years ago with the introduction of the Policing in Your Neighbourhood (PiYN) model.

3. A Panel member asked if there were examples of reviews being undertaken on the use of the Surrey Community Trigger by individuals who were not happy with the outcome, as well as the cause for that unhappiness. In response, the PCC noted that out of approximately thirty cases of the Community Trigger, only a few were referred to the OPCC. He added that he was pleased with the increased uptake since April 2019, as it had been under-utilised and under-publicised. He noted that even if cases did not meet the legal threshold for consideration, it was a useful mechanism to raise concerns.
4. Discussing Joint Enforcement Teams (JETs), a Panel member explained that after liaising with officers in Waverley Borough Council he noted that Waverley did in fact have a JET although no activity had happened in the last few years and he queried if other boroughs and districts were in the same position in that a JET had been established, then without further activity. In response, the PCC noted that initially Waverley was keen on establishing its JET and it had £50,000 as start-up costs but for some reason the JET did not proceed further.
 - The PCC added that following the Panel's informal meeting with the Chief Constable where JETs had been discussed, he had instigated a review of JETs and the powers granted through the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS). The PCC had drafted a letter to the Chief Constable asking for Surrey Police to clarify and update its policy on JETs. The PCC noted that although he could not force councils to establish JETs, there would be a publicity drive to raise awareness of JETs.
5. A Panel member noted that although the Panel had not been in receipt of the number of 101 calls made to the Contact Centre which were not on matters for the police, he noted the importance of educating the public further on when to call the police as opposed to other agencies such as borough or district councils as that would streamline the 101 system. In response the PCC noted that although there were many calls which were not on police matters, that residents who made a call on 101 or online had genuine concerns and as a major public service, Surrey Police had a duty to respond and sign-post residents to the correct organisations. He noted that Surrey Police did run campaigns to publicise the use of 101 for police matters.
6. A Panel member asked if there was a breakdown of antisocial behaviour (ASB) offences during lockdown which distinguished between ASB offences as violations of the national Covid-19 restrictions as opposed to ASB offences as a result of increased community tensions during lockdown. In response, the PCC explained that distinguishing between Covid and non-Covid ASB offences was complicated, noting that there was an artificial spike at the beginning of lockdown relating to neighbourly disputes and the breaking of social-distancing rules. He emphasised that Surrey Police had been successful in policing Covid-19 through the 'four Es': Engage, Explain, Encourage and Enforce - enforcement had been the last resort as many in Surrey were compliant with the Covid-19 restrictions.
7. A Panel member asked what sort of initiatives had come from the newly created Prevention and Problem Solving Team and what the outcomes were. In response, the PCC noted that the new Team was a positive initiative which focussed on solving pre-crimes. The Team undertook statistical analysis on hotspots for ASB as one example which helped support local policing teams; he noted that it was difficult to judge the

success of the Team as it had been newly created but had received good feedback.

8. A Panel member agreed with the earlier comments from Panel members that the performance measures were not satisfactory. He was concerned with the decrease in the '% force budget spent on frontline policing' from the 2015/16 baseline of 71% to 65.8% in 2019/20 and requested that the latest figure for 2020/21 be provided - particularly as residents did not feel that Surrey Police was visible.
 - In response, the PCC explained that the reason for the decreasing percentage was that Surrey Police was a young force, pay increments increase the percentage.
9. The Panel member noted concern on the 'number of police officers on front-line' which had fluctuated since the 2015/16 baseline and had decreased in 2020/21 to date. He asked if that number could be broken up into mobile, beat and back office police officers. He also queried whether the data source which was taken from the Home Office Police Workforce statistics and Home Office definition of front-line reflected Surrey Police's position.
 - In response, the PCC explained that both performance measures noted above by the Panel member were national statistics and he agreed that they did not represent policing well; especially as it was difficult to categorise frontline policing. He contrasted the positive increase in police officers through the national uplift, with the possible issue of 'reverse civilianisation' which had affected other forces whereby less funding for support staff meant that police officers were asked to do support staff's jobs and so less police officers were on the frontline.

Councillor Christine Elmer joined at 11.20 am

RESOLVED:

The Police and Crime Panel noted the report and expressed its concern on the reduction in the Plan's performance measures since the 2015/16 baseline, particularly on the halving of the 'Positive Outcome Rate for crimes against vulnerable people' performance measure.

The Panel requested that the PCC provide more detail on the improvements made concerning the Plan's performance measures and will provide the Chief Constable's new plan to address the matter.

Actions/further information to be provided:

1. **R38/20** - The PCC will report back in more detail on the improvements made concerning the Plan's performance measures and will provide the Chief Constable's new plan to address the matter - including the nature of the restructuring in investigation structure that the Chief Constable had put in place to address the 7% decline in the reduction of positive outcomes (see item 11 - key point 3).
2. **R39/20** - The PCC will provide examples of reviews being undertaken on the use of the Surrey Community Trigger by individuals who were not happy with the outcome, as well as the cause for that unhappiness.

3. **R40/20** - The Panel will be kept informed on the review of JETs and the powers granted through the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS).
4. **R41/20** - The Panel will be provided with latest 2020/21 figure for the following performance measure: ‘% force budget spent on frontline policing’.
5. **R42/20** - The Panel will be provided with the breakdown of the following performance measure: ‘number of police officers on front-line’, into mobile, beat and back office police officers.
6. **R43/20** - The PCC will review whether the national data sources for the following performance measures: ‘% of force budget spent on frontline policing’ and ‘Number of police officers on front-line’ reflected Surrey Police’s position.

63/20 HMICFRS INSPECTION REPORTS [Item 8]

Witnesses:

David Munro - Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner

Alison Bolton - Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. The PCC explained that the table in the report outlining the annual PEEL (Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy) inspections reported in September 2019 - compared back to 2017 - by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) were outdated and force inspections for 2020 had been suspended due to Covid-19.
2. A Panel member asked the PCC how one of the Areas for Improvement identified in the 2019 PEEL inspection that ‘the force should ensure its aversion to risk is not constraining ideas and creating unnecessary bureaucracy and internal demand’ had been addressed. In response, the PCC stressed that Surrey Police was not pleased with the overall Requires Improvement rating for Efficiency as it did not believe that it aligned to the considerable improvements made since 2017. The PCC noted that HMICFRS had been consulted upon how to address the rating and that he would provide the Panel with more information on the matter as detailed in the original report.
3. Discussing the above point in more detail, the Vice-Chairman stressed that it was a concern to note that Efficiency had decreased from a Good rating in 2017 to Requires improvement in 2019 and asked what action had been taken to improve Efficiency in terms of meeting current demand and using resources as well as planning for the future.
 - In response the PCC reiterated that the force disagreed with that rating as a large amount of work had been undertaken in both the long term: such as the Building the Future project, improving the carbon efficiency of its fleet and the rollout of Body Worn Video technology; and in the immediate term: such as the newly formed Prevention and Problem Solving Team as well as the Surrey High Intensity Partnership Programme (SHIPP).
 - The PCC noted that there was not one action plan to address Efficiency as such, but he would provide his and the Chief Constable’s responses to the 2019 PEEL inspection report as

well as the progress made to date on addressing the Areas for Improvement.

4. A Panel member was concerned with the Areas for Improvement identified which suggested that Surrey Police could do more to support its staff, particularly concerning 'the review of its occupational health unit (OHU)'; that 'the force should improve how it records and monitors its 'Focus' discussions to [...] effectively capture issues such as wellbeing'; 'the force should ensure that it has a talent programme that is open to everyone and consistently applied'.
 - In response, the PCC agreed that ensuring there were good systems in place for the wellbeing and health of staff and officers was vital. He noted that Durham University which specialised in those fields were asked to hold a survey of staff and officers to assess what their concerns were - one problem was the lack of sleep as a result of shift work. The PCC commented that ensuring a happy and motivated workforce was a priority and he would provide the Panel with an update on the improvements made concerning wellbeing and the occupational health review.
 - The Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer (OPCC) explained that Surrey Police had recently launched a joint occupational health hub with Sussex Police to ensure that it was easier for officers and staff to get information from one place.
5. The Chairman noted that at the Panel's recent informal meeting, the Chief Constable highlighted a few statistics relating to Surrey Police's national ranking concerning the positive outcome rate of areas such as serious sexual offences. The Chairman queried whether the Panel could receive the rankings of all forces nationally on positive outcome rates to assess Surrey Police's position. In response, the PCC noted that he would look into whether those national statistics could be released.

RESOLVED:

The Police and Crime Panel noted the report and HMICFRS findings, and expressed its concerns on the Areas for Improvement as identified by HMICFRS.

Actions/further information to be provided:

1. **R44/20** - The PCC will provide more information on how the Areas for Improvement identified by HMICFRS had been addressed as detailed in the original 2019 PEEL inspection report; as well as providing his and the Chief Constable's responses to that inspection report.

Particularly focussing on the following points:

- 'the force should ensure its aversion to risk is not constraining ideas and creating unnecessary bureaucracy and internal demand'.
 - The Requires Improvement rating of 'Efficiency'.
 - 'the review of its occupational health unit (OHU)'; that 'the force should improve how it records and monitors its 'Focus' discussions to [...] effectively capture issues such as wellbeing'; 'the force should ensure that it has a talent programme that is open to everyone and consistently applied'.
2. **R45/20** - The PCC will look into whether the statistics relating to Surrey Police's national ranking concerning the positive outcome

rate of areas such as serious sexual offences compared to the rankings of all forces nationally could be provided to the Panel.

64/20 HOME OFFICE REVIEW OF POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONERS - PART ONE [Item 9]

Witnesses:

None

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. A Panel member referred to the OPCC's response to Part One of the Home Office's PCC Review regarding preparation for Part Two and whether the levers currently available to PCCs were sufficient to allow them to cut crime effectively in their force areas. He noted he was satisfied with the first paragraph of the PCC's response regarding the benefits of PCC's acquiring a General Power of Competence, which acknowledged that PCCs had limited powers to enter into property transactions unless they could show there was a direct policing purpose that justified each specific transaction.
2. The Panel member explained that he had difficulty in agreeing with the second paragraph of the PCC's response as there was no mention of the governance issues within local government in relation to the selling, developing and buying of property. He emphasised that such business transactions needed to be profitable and advice on such matters needed to be scrutinised by the Panel as part of its governance oversight on the PCC's actions. In response, the Chairman noted that the responses on the PCC Review had been submitted but would request further detail and expansion as to how to manage the General Power of Competence in relation to local governance issues, in consultation for Part Two of the PCC Review.

RESOLVED:

The Police and Crime Panel noted the report and appendices.

Actions/further information to be provided:

1. **R46/20** - The Panel will request further detail and expansion on the possible acquisition of a PCC General Power of Competence in consultation for Part Two of the PCC Review; regarding local governance issues in relation to the selling, developing and buying of property as the Panel has a responsibility to scrutinise the PCC's actions and advice received on such matters.

65/20 BUILDING THE FUTURE - UPDATE [Item 10]

Witnesses:

David Munro - Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. The PCC noted that the project which included the move to the new Surrey Police headquarters in Leatherhead along with other property moves, was progressing well and that an announcement would be made shortly on the chosen architect.
2. The PCC added that positive discussions were had with Guildford Borough Council and Mole Valley District Council on the move and noted there was a lot of planning to be done over the next five years. He was pleased that the force was looking to retain and relocate the renowned Police Dog Training School situated at Mount Browne.
3. A Panel member commented that he had had experience of office moves which were often traumatic for staff and queried if staff and officers were kept informed on the project. In response, the PCC reassured the Panel that staff and officers had been kept well informed throughout the project, the trade unions had been consulted as had the Police Federation of England and Wales. He recognised that the move would be a traumatic time and that it was paramount that staff and officers be supported.
4. The Vice-Chairman asked if the PCC could provide more detail on the work that had been initiated to assess the requirements for Neighbourhood bases for Mole Valley and Reigate.

Councillor Bob Milton left the meeting at 11.44 am

- In response, the PCC noted that the force wished to retain a base in Mole Valley which was currently located in the District Council's building - Pippbrook. He was not aware of any specific reasons why the base should need to relocate, but if it was to, it would be re-provided elsewhere in the district. Regarding Reigate's base, he noted that there were disposal plans for the existing police station once the Leatherhead site was operational; adding that it was his pledge as PCC to ensure a police base in each of Surrey's boroughs and districts.

RESOLVED:

The Police and Crime Panel noted the contents of the report.

Actions/further information to be provided:

None.

66/20 FEEDBACK ON PERFORMANCE MEETINGS BETWEEN THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER AND CHIEF CONSTABLE [Item 11]

Witnesses:

David Munro - Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. A Panel member noted that it was positive to see Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) recruits up by 46% on last year's figures, however requested that the actual figures be provided. In response, the

PCC noted that just over 5% of police officers in Surrey Police identified as BAME. The force's aim was to represent its community and the influx of new recruits as a result of the precept rise and national uplift was helping increase BAME representation - 10% of Surrey's population were BAME at the last census.

2. The Panel member also asked if there were figures available on the eight other protected characteristics named under the Equality Act 2010. In response, the PCC explained that some of the other eight protected characteristics were simple to measure as for example 'sex' was measured through the number of women in the force, which was just under 50%. However, the PCC stressed that 'sexual orientation' and some other protected characteristics were difficult to measure as they were sensitive. He noted that none of the nine protected characteristics were any cause for concern regarding representation.
3. The Vice-Chairman asked as to the nature of the restructuring in investigation structure that the Chief Constable had put in place to address the 7% decline in the reduction of positive outcomes. In response, the PCC reiterated that he was unhappy with the positive outcome rates and that the detailed report would be brought back (see item 7 - R38/20).

RESOLVED:

The Surrey Police and Crime Panel noted the update on the PCC's Performance Meetings.

Actions/further information to be provided:

1. **R47/20** - The PCC will provide the latest figure on BAME recruits.
2. **R48/20** - The PCC will provide figures on the eight other protected characteristics named under the Equality Act 2010 - where possible i.e. 'sex' measured through the number of women in the force, acknowledging that some of the protected characteristics were sensitive.

67/20 COMMISSIONER'S QUESTION TIME [Item 12]

Witnesses:

David Munro - Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner

Key points raised in the discussion:

See Annex C - Submitted Questions and Responses

1. Councillor Will Forster (Woking Borough Council):

Thanked the PCC for his response and pursuance on the matter of looking into the possible reopening of Woking Magistrates' Court or using the Coroner's Court for magistrate cases and lobbying the government to address the backlogs in the Crown Court; as delays in the Criminal Justice System (CJS) have a large impact on the work of Police and Crime Panels and PCCs.

In response, the PCC noted that the delays in the CJS was a grave concern. He reported that Surrey's courts were back to where they were before Covid-19 regarding the throughput, however they had lost months and so had been consulted on regarding their plans to tackle the backlog. He had raised the suggestion of reopening the former Woking Magistrates' Court (now Surrey Coroner's Court) for magistrate cases with Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service's (HMCT) Surrey & Sussex Cluster Manager. He added that the strategy in Surrey unlike in Sussex was to utilise existing courts more fully.

2. Councillor David Reeve (Epsom and Ewell Borough Council) - Chairman:

The Chairman asked for reassurance on whether the new recruits as a result of the precept rise and national uplift were included in the 177 current vetting cases.

In response, the PCC reassured the Panel that before new recruits joined Surrey Police they needed to be vetted through a systematic and thorough process.

RESOLVED:

The Police and Crime Panel raised any issues or queries concerning Crime and Policing in Surrey with the Commissioner.

Actions/further information to be provided:

None.

**68/20 SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020
[Item 13]**

Witnesses:

Amelia Christopher - Committee Manager, Surrey County Council (SCC)

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. The Committee Manager (SCC) explained that the report had been newly introduced as it formed part of the in-year monitoring information requirements and Key Performance Indicators in accordance with best practice for scrutiny and transparency as noted in schedule 3 of the Panel's Home Office Grant Agreement.
2. She also highlighted that the report covered the Panel's activity between July 2019 and May 2020. It included key governance points such as the Panel's role as noted in its terms of reference, its membership, agenda items, key decisions made such as agreeing the precept and reviewing the PCC's annual report and plan, complaints considered by the complaints sub-committee, a summary of key points made by the finance sub-group, the end-year and mid-year claims and any visits or training Panel members undertook.
3. The Chairman thanked the Committee Manager (SCC) for compiling the report and noted that it would be put on the Panel's website.

RESOLVED:

The Police and Crime Panel noted the Surrey Police and Crime Panel's Annual Report 2019-2020.

Actions/further information to be provided:

1. **R49/20** - The Committee Manager (SCC) will put Surrey Police and Crime Panel's Annual Report 2019-2020 on the Panel's website.

69/20 SURREY PCP BUDGET MID-YEAR CLAIM 2020 [Item 14]

Witnesses:

Amelia Christopher - Committee Manager, Surrey County Council (SCC)

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. The Committee Manager (SCC) explained that the report was newly introduced, thanking the Vice-Chairman for the suggestion in order to increase transparency. As although the mid-year claim was sent to the Home Office, it had not been published as a report to the Panel like the Panel's end-year claim.
2. She outlined that the expenditure included travel expenses, refreshments, printing and postage as well as webcasting, and that it was less than last year's mid-year claim due to Covid-19 and the Panel being held remotely.
3. She noted that the Home Office Grant was underutilised in key areas such as training and emphasised that full Panel training was a priority and would be arranged for early 2021.

RESOLVED:

The Surrey Police and Crime Panel noted the report.

Actions/further information to be provided:

1. **R50/20** – The Committee Manager (SCC) will arrange full Panel training for early 2021.

70/20 COMPLAINTS RECEIVED SINCE THE LAST MEETING [Item 15]

Witnesses:

Amelia Christopher - Committee Manager, Surrey County Council (SCC)

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. The Committee Manager (SCC) explained that the Complaints Sub-Committee received one complaint since the last Panel meeting.
2. She summarised the handling of the complaint, noting that on receipt of the complaint the complainant and PCC were consulted upon to provide supporting information. On considering that information, the Director of

Law and Governance (SCC) and the Senior Principal Lawyer (SCC) were consulted and it was recommended to the Chairman that in accordance with section 3 of the Panel's agreed Complaints Protocol on the disapplication of the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012; it was recommended that the complaint should not be subjected to resolution by the Panel's Complaints Sub-Committee with regard to Part 4 of the Regulations.

3. The Committee Manager (SCC) explained that the Regulations could only be disapplied if the complaint fell under certain categories, complaint PCP 0035 was disapplied and therefore required no further action as the complaint was both repetitious - it was deemed a reformulation of a complaint considered in 2017 - and it related to an incident that was more than 12 months old.

RESOLVED:

The Police and Crime Panel noted the content of the report and that the Complaints Sub-Committee had received one complaint since the last Panel meeting.

Actions/further information to be provided:

None.

71/20 RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 16]

Witnesses:

Amelia Christopher - Committee Manager, Surrey County Council (SCC)
David Munro - Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. The Committee Manager (SCC) and subsequently Chairman, thanked the PCC and OPCC for their comprehensive responses to the actions.
2. She noted that in relation to recommendation R30/20, a report had been annexed to the tracker noting the organisations being liaised with regarding the co-commissioning of enhanced substance misuse support and to consider both Alcoholics, and Narcotics Anonymous.
3. She reported that a few actions remained outstanding, highlighting that R22/20 regarding the Country Watch crime prevention initiative, was being followed up and R31/20 on the more detailed breakdown on the distribution of the newly recruited staff and officers by 2021/22 had been provided to Panel members.
4. She welcomed any comments on the draft Forward Work Programme for 2021.
5. She also noted that she had received expressions of interest from the Panel's co-opted independent members to join the Complaints Sub-Committee and the Finance Sub-Group.
6. The PCC reassured the Panel that he was aware of the complaint made against Surrey Police's Deputy Chief Constable, adding that the Chief Constable had asked another force's Professional Standards Department to investigate the matter.

RESOLVED:

The Panel noted the Actions & Recommendations Tracker and provided input into the Forward Work Programme.

That the independent members joined the following:

- Mr Philip Walker joined the Complaints Sub-committee.
- Mr Martin Stilwell joined the Finance Sub-Group.

Actions/further information to be provided:

1. **R51/20** - The Committee Manager (SCC) will update the membership list of the Complaints Sub-Committee and the Finance Sub-Group to include the independent members.

72/20 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 17]

The next meeting of the Surrey Police and Crime Panel will be on 5 February 2021, the location is to be confirmed however this will most likely be remote via Microsoft Teams due to Covid-19.

Meeting ended at: 12.05 pm

Chairman

SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – 24 NOVEMBER 2020**PROCEDURAL MATTERS – PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES****1. Question submitted by Paul Kennedy**

The average waiting time for callers to Surrey Police's 101 service was 3 minutes 51 seconds in August, and 5% of callers who got through had to wait 20 minutes or more, according to Surrey Police's latest monthly performance report. The report does not disclose the presumably huge number of abandoned calls, representing thousands of missed reports a month about suspicious and antisocial behaviour, drug dealing, domestic abuse, thefts, assaults, vehicle and rural crime etc from victims of crime and other concerned members of the public, many of them without access to other forms of communication.

Do you agree that this level of delays and missed reporting is unacceptable and if so what are your plans to improve the 101 service for Surrey residents?

Response:

This is an area of concern for me as PCC. This is a performance measure I monitor closely and discuss regularly with the Chief Constable, including at our recent Performance Meeting last week.

As said in the question, the average answering time for 101 calls has increased from 1 min 24s in March to 3 min 51s in August. This has been due to Covid-19 and restrictions in place. Different working arrangements have had to be made in the Contact Centre - with less desk sharing for shifts and making use of different buildings to the usual Contact Centre facilities. This has made the logistics of answering calls and supervision difficult. In addition, there have been times of staff having to isolate and call taking is not a role that can be done from home. Covid restrictions have also affected the recruitment and training of staff. At the same time demand has increased.

I believe the Surrey Police Contact Centre has done their best to maintain public contact during these times. Answering of 999 calls, for people needing emergency assistance, is always prioritised over answering 101 calls, and this has remained very quick at an average of 4 seconds. During periods of very high demand (e.g. a road traffic incident) calls to the emergency number can spike and 101 calls can take 10 or 20 minutes to answer until that peak demand is passed.

In August 2020, Surrey Police answered 29,042 non-emergency 101 calls, as opposed to 21,960 in March 2020 and 13,143 emergency 999 calls as opposed to 10,652 in March 2020. The planned roll-out of the digital contact including Livechat and reporting via social media went ahead as planned, and many Surrey residents are making use of this new facility for contact.

My office is not currently picking up concerns from the public about waiting times. It may be that the public accept that during these difficult times non-emergency call answering may be a little longer.

Whilst people are waiting to be connected to an operator, they hear a recorded message signposting them to the Surrey Police website, including being able to make reports online or use the Livechat function. Many people abandon their call at this stage. It is not known how many go on to use other forms of contact, but it can be considered highly likely that many of

these abandoned calls are due to people choosing a different form of contact, once advised of that option.

In summary, I am concerned about 101 call answering times and look to see improvements as Covid-19 workplace restrictions are eased in the future and demand returns to near normal levels. But I do think Surrey Police are doing their best and that people are getting the help they need.

SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – 24 NOVEMBER 2020

PROCEDURAL MATTERS – SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

1. Supplementary question submitted by Paul Kennedy
--

Thank you Chairman and thank you Commissioner for your response.

Like you, I would like to pay tribute to everyone who is working so hard to keep us all safe in these difficult times.

This morning, I sent you some evidence (see below) which appears to contradict your answer about the number of 101 calls actually answered, and also your suggestion that abandoned calls are due to the initial recorded message rather than waiting times.

However, my supplementary question relates more to the tone of your answer, which seems to be saying four minute waiting times are unfortunate but there is not a lot more we can do at the moment, and we are encouraging people to use other forms of communication instead.

So my supplementary question is: "Is it your policy during the pandemic to deter or at least discourage people from using the 101 service?"

Additional information provided:

I would like to alert the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey and the Surrey Police and Crime Panel to three apparent inaccuracies in his original response:

1. Numbers of 101 calls answered

The Commissioner stated:

"In August 2020, Surrey Police answered 29,042 non-emergency 101 calls, as opposed to 21,960 in March 2020 ..."

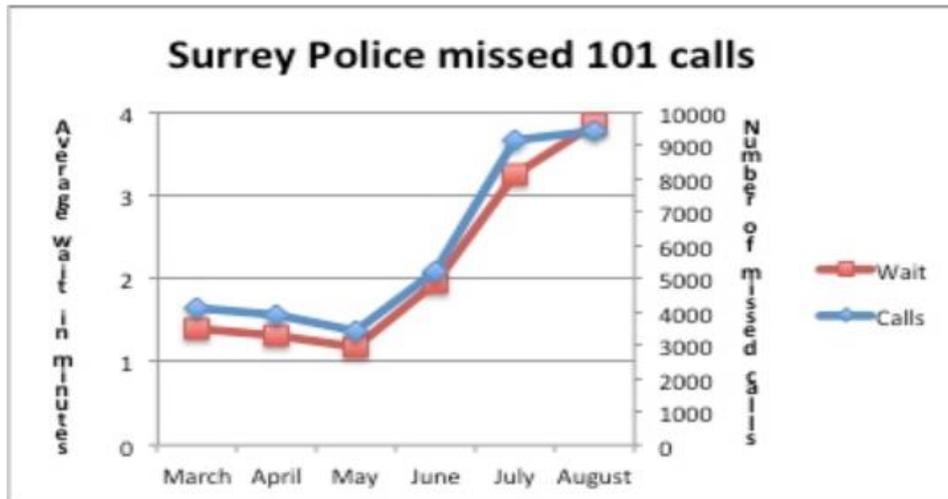
However, a Freedom of Information request (attached) has confirmed that these figures are the numbers of calls received rather than answered by an operator. The actual numbers of calls answered were 19,614 in August 2020 (just 68% of calls received), compared with 17,833 in March 2020.

2. Impact of Covid-19 on 101 performance

The Commissioner stated:

"This has been due to Covid-19 and restrictions in place."

However, the chart below suggests that performance actually improved during the first two months of lockdown when the Covid-19 risk to staff was at its highest. Performance only deteriorated later, particularly in July, when just 11,943 calls (57% of calls received) were answered.



3. Abandoned calls being due to initial recorded message

The Commissioner stated:

"Whilst people are waiting to be connected to an operator, they hear a recorded message signposting them to the Surrey Police website, including being able to make reports online or use the Livechat function. Many people abandon their call at this stage. It is not known how many of these abandoned calls are due to people choosing a different form of contact, but it can be considered highly likely that many of these abandoned calls are due to people choosing a different form of contact, once advised of that option."

However, the chart above suggests that the number of abandoned 101 calls in each month is closely correlated to the average waiting time to be answered. 9,428 calls were abandoned in August when the average waiting time was 3 minutes 51 seconds, but only 4,127 were abandoned in March when the waiting time was 1 minute 24 seconds.

The primary reason for abandoning a 101 call would appear to be frustration with the length of the call.

RESPONSE:

With regard to numbers of calls answered, Mr Kennedy is correct. Apologies that my office (OPCC) used the term 'calls answered' rather than 'calls received'.

With regard to the performance and months, Mr Kennedy is correct that call answering did not deteriorate in the first few months of restrictions and took until June to show a marked effect. The force reports in the 101 answering times that I have received and have informed me that the deterioration in answering calls was due to Covid and the changes in working practices required. The data shows that this took a few months to have an impact as Mr Kennedy has said.

I agree that increases in time taken to answer a 101 call lead to increased abandoned calls. But given that the recorded messaging continues to provide people with alternative options for contact, people may well have chosen to take up one of those alternative forms.

SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – 24 NOVEMBER 2020**PROCEDURAL MATTERS – PANEL MEMBER QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES****1. Question submitted by Councillor Will Forster (Woking Borough Council)**

Back in January, the Police and Crime Commissioner wrote to the Ministry of Justice with his concerns about the lack of capacity in the criminal justice system.

Please see the letter here: <https://surrey-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/2020-01-14-Ltr-to-MoJ-re-CJS-capacity.pdf>

Please can the Commissioner confirm what response, if any, he has had to this letter?

As the Commissioner is aware, the backlog of cases has notably increased due to coronavirus pandemic and that Woking's Magistrates Court was closed almost ten years ago. That building is now used as a Coroner's Court.

To help clear this backlog and get justice for victims of crime, please will the Commissioner agree to look at the merits of reopening the Woking Magistrates Court, or using the Coroner's Court for magistrate cases and lobby the Ministry of Justice and Surrey County Council accordingly?

Response:

A response to the PCC's January letter to the Ministry of Justice outlining concerns around court capacity was received on 12th February and a copy is appended.

As Cllr Forster asserts, since this correspondence, the problem of delays within the criminal justice system has been exacerbated considerably as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. One of the solutions to addressing these delays has been HMCTS's plans to introduce 'Nightingale Courts'. Its 'Additional Courts and Tribunals Capacity' Programme team is identifying suitable properties in which to set up temporary court venues across the country. HMCTS will first consider whether there is sufficient capacity in its existing court estate, for example by providing temporary buildings or installing Perspex screens. Where this isn't possible, HMCTS will look at adjusting its workload (prioritising Crown Court cases) and then at the locality of any potential site to see whether it would prove suitable for staff, judiciary and justice partners. The suggestion of using the former Woking Magistrates Court building has been put to this team by the PCC, via HMCTS' Surrey & Sussex Cluster Manager, and we await their feedback.

In Surrey, the position in relation to restoring court capacity is better than in other parts of the country. In Surrey's Magistrates Court, all work that was halted in lockdown has been re-listed and HMCTS staff are working with Surrey Police to list any new work they have in the pipeline. They are tackling trial delay by opening up more trial slots within the existing courts. Guildford Crown Court is currently sitting two trials per week. A portacabin has been set up for jury use which will soon mean capacity increases to three trial courts per week. The rebuilding of one courtroom will allow further trials from early November and full court capacity (all 5 courtrooms hearing trials) will be established by January 2021.

HMCTS has published an overarching recovery plan in response to the pandemic. The plan's aim is firstly to return to pre-Covid disposal rates as soon as possible and then, to reduce the backlog to sustainable levels. Aside from increasing court capacity, HMCTS and partners are looking at other methods such as the use of audio and video technology and

'trial blitz' activities'. The plan is monitored at the PCC-chaired Local Criminal Justice Board.

In spite of assurances that court capacity back (or almost back) to pre-Covid levels, the backlog of cases prior to the lockdown and of course resulting from it, remains an issue. The PCC has raised concerns about the impact on victims and witnesses (and the resulting pressures on those staff and services who support them) and also on defendants who are denied a swift hearing. As such, a Surrey–Sussex Gold Group has recently been established with both PCCs and representatives from HMCTS, the Judiciary and the police to work together to review and improve the current situation and determine whether any further innovative solutions or best practice from other areas can be introduced.

2. Question submitted by Councillor David Reeve (Epsom and Ewell Borough Council)
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Please may the Panel receive an update on vetting within Surrey Police and the OPCC; as a couple of years ago, the Panel was informed that they were well behind and then that they were making progress. How many employees in Surrey Police and the OPCC have not been vetted to date?

Response:

Provided by Surrey and Sussex Police Vetting Manager:

Post collaboration in 2018 a dedicated team was set up to review the vetting for all Surrey staff and officers to ensure compliancy with the 2017 HMIC recommendation that all forces should be compliant with national vetting policy and all personnel should be vetted to the appropriate level for the role they fulfil. This team achieved full compliancy with the HMIC recommendation by June 2019 and the Chief Constable subsequently removed this from the Force risk register.

The Joint Force Vetting Unit continues to keep the vetting levels under review to ensure compliancy with the Vetting Code of Practice and associated College of Policing APP (Authorised Professional Practice) which has superseded the National Vetting Policy. Regular updates on the status of force vetting are also provided to the HMIC such as their spring data collection back in July.

Currently there are 177 Surrey vetting cases in process the majority of which are renewals of existing clearances but also includes new applications such as 27 officers and 24 staff as part of the Operation Uplift programme.



17 FEB 2020

Chris Philp MP
Parliamentary Under-
Secretary of State for
Justice and Minister for
London

David Munro, Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey
PO Box 412
Guildford
Surrey
GU3 1YJ

MoJ ref: ADR74916

Dear David,

12/5 February 2020

PROTECTING CAPACITY WITHIN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Thank you for your letter of 14th January 2020 highlighting your concerns about pressures facing the criminal justice system in Surrey.

I want to reassure you that this Government is working hard to address the concerns you raise and is committed to ensuring justice is served in a timely fashion. The allocation of sitting days is, as you say, based on forecasts carried out to determine the number of cases we expect the Crown Court to receive and this has been falling steadily in recent years. The number of cases at the Crown Court has decreased by almost 40% since 2014 and, despite an increasingly complex caseload, waiting times for the first three quarters of 2019, were their lowest in four years.

With fewer cases making it into the Crown Court and waiting times falling, the number of sitting days has been reduced in the past but we have been keeping this under constant review to ensure any changes in demand are met. We have responded to the recent rise in demand by increasing sitting days by 850 for the remainder of 2019/20, to ease immediate pressures on the Crown Court. We have also allocated a minimum of 87,000 Crown Court sitting days for 2020/21 which is an increase of at least 4,700 on last year's allocation.

You are absolutely right to suggest the importance of looking longer term and in the context of overall efficiency of the criminal justice process. This is exactly what we are doing. We know, for example, that the majority of time for criminal cases completing at the Crown Court is currently spent prior to entering our court system. Our investment in 20,000 new police officers and £85m in the Crown Prosecution Service should help improve the time it takes to bring a prosecution to court. We are, of course, working closely with other departments to analyse how this investment will affect our courts so we can accurately assess future demand.

I share your concerns about the impact trial delays have on victims and witnesses and commend the work you are doing to provide appropriate support. Case progression is a key priority for this Government and the Criminal Justice Board is driving forward work to improve disclosure, witness engagement and case file quality. I also want to reassure you that we are determined to address the problems you raise about the increase in use of release under investigation (RUI) which is why we are undertaking a review of pre-charge legislation. Our plans for a Royal Commission on the criminal justice process provide a significant

opportunity which could deliver a fundamental review of some of the key issues affecting the system now, or that may do in the future.

We are determined to do all we can to create a more resilient and efficient criminal justice system which responds effectively to current demands and emerging pressures and inspires public confidence. I would welcome your continued support in helping us to achieve that aim.

Best wishes, 

CHRIS PHILP MP