

## **ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL**

A meeting of the Accountability and Performance Panel was held at Police Headquarters Martlesham, and via Microsoft Teams at 09:30 on Friday 22 November 2024.

### **PRESENT:**

#### **Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner**

Colette Batson (Chief Finance Officer), Kate Boswell (Executive Assistant to the PCC and Chief Executive), Sandra Graffham (Head of Communications and Engagement and acting Chief Executive Officer), Tim Passmore (Police and Crime Commissioner), James Sheridan (Policy and Commissioning Officer).

#### **Suffolk Constabulary**

Eamonn Bridger (Assistant Chief Constable), Julie Dean (Assistant Chief Constable), Rachel Kearton (Chief Constable), Kenneth Kilpatrick (Assistant Chief Officer), Matt Paisley (Staff Officer to the Chief Officer Team).

#### **In attendance for the Public Agenda via Teams**

David Ellesmere (Police and Crime Panel Member), Adriana Stapleton (Police and Crime Panel Support Officer).

### **Apologies:**

Rob Jones (Deputy Chief Constable).

## **PUBLIC AGENDA**

### **1 Public Question Time**

1.1 The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited both Constabulary and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner attendees to introduce themselves. He advised that no questions had been received in advance of this meeting.

### **2 Open minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2024 (Paper AP24/45)**

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and approved by the PCC.

2.2 All actions were noted as complete or in hand and were being followed up outside of the meeting.

### **3 Financial Monitoring (Paper AP24/46)**

- 3.1 The PCC stated that he had attended the national APCC (Association of Police and Crime Commissioners) and NPCC (National Police Chief's Council) Summit meeting, which allowed him the opportunity to speak to the Home Secretary. He raised his concerns about the increase in National Insurance (NI) contribution, asking if this cost will be fully reimbursed on an employee basis. The response stated that the treasury was considering this but did not confirm if payment will be received in full for every employee. There is a need to be mindful of the additional monies that the voluntary and charity sector will have to pay because of the NI increase, as it will result in a huge strain on budgets. The PCC would like the Home Office to look at this extremely carefully to consider the impact of these changes.
- 3.2 Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) Kenneth Kilpatrick presented the half-year Financial Monitoring report, covering the period until the end of Sept 2024. The report highlights that the capital forecast is on target, and table 3.1 shows an operating underspend of approximately £300K. The surplus budget has been driven by income and reimbursement of costs.
- 3.3 The Chief Finance Officer (CFO) commented that the OPCC underspend is being driven by vacancies, which will not be changing until Spring 2025.
- 3.4 The PCC asked if funding has changed from the original amounts, as documented at point 5.1. The ACO replied that the amount has changed from the original programme. There is still a requirement to maintain the headcount of 1425 but there could be more jeopardy for the next financial year in maintaining and hitting the target figures, with penalties applied if the targets are not met.
- 3.5 The PCC asked if the costs at point 3.3.1, relate to the Dangerous Dog Act and the kennelling of confiscated dogs. The ACO responded that it relates to the change in XL Bully dog policing and costs from kennelling. Negotiations are underway with DEFRA (Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) to recoup some of the kennelling costs.

#### **4 Supporting Children and Young People (Paper AP24/47)**

- 4.1 Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) Bridger highlighted that there are strong partnerships in the county within this area of work, and the MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) continue to review findings with key activities being tracked and managed by a steering group. The area of missing children is showing progress in some categories but not an overall reduction. The Constabulary is seeing an increase in work in relation to child sexual abuse online, which is due to the national work being undertaken, and more referrals being made into the force. This is an area of challenge for the force moving forward and will be kept under scrutiny. The data is impressive for engagement work with schools and children and young people (CYP), which links back to the operating model and review work. There have been visits to over 728 educational establishments, with over 85,000 children (from Primary and Secondary schools) engaged, covering subjects such as county lines and knife crime. ACC Bridger noted that a national strategy for CYP is outstanding, and once received the recommendations will be implemented locally. There is one financial element to note for the Youth Justice System, who have pledged to review the need for the fully funded PCSO (Police Community Support Officer). This is ongoing and does not have a completion date.

- 4.2 The PCC commented that he hoped the Youth Justice PCSO role is retained, and the work and changes that have been implemented are not lost altogether. He suggested that if there were other routes to accessing funding, such as the Core Business Rate Fund, then these should be explored.
- 4.3 The PCC asked what the new NPCC strategy will involve, and how will it fit with other strategies such as Clear Hold Build. ACC Bridger advised the force had been consulted on the strategy and would be happy to provide a copy to the PCC for discussion once received.  
**ACTION – ACC Bridger to provide a copy of the NPCC Children and Young Persons Strategy for discussion once received.**
- 4.4 The PCC asked what the research at 2.1.4 for the Local Authority CYPS was looking to achieve. ACC Bridger responded that the research flagged areas of improvement for Local Authority partners, when they refer all agencies are obliged by the operating procedures. Overall, this has allowed them to conduct more challenging meetings effectively.
- 4.5 The PCC asked if increase in demand for the Child Sex Offender Disclosure Scheme (CSODS) is an area of concern. ACC Bridger replied that this scheme has been run successfully for a long time, and whilst there is an upturn in demand, overall, the numbers remain relatively small with no backlogs. Nationally Suffolk Constabulary are performing well in this area.
- 4.6 The PCC asked what can be done about the missing key information for the MARAC as referenced at point 2.4.3. ACC Bridger responded that this is reported on as part of the ongoing review work, with misinformation and the quality of information being areas that have been flagged for improvement. The force is scrutinising, highlighting and challenging the right agencies with what is missing and what the expectations are going forward. This will continue to be monitored and reported back on. The PCC requested he is informed of the progress made.  
**ACTION – ACC Bridger to update the PCC on the progress being made with missing key information being fed into the MARAC and the feedback to the agencies involved.**
- 4.7 The Policy and Commissioning Officer asked at point 2.7.5, do we no longer have the data to show if the increase in demand from national referrals is impacting local outcomes when it comes to suspects arrested and charge rates. ACC Bridger responded that this is being kept under review and there are no issues with the outcomes. If there was a problem within this area it would be highlighted within the report.
- 4.8 The PCC asked, following a recent local headline about an increase in the number of incidents of knife violence in schools, what else could be done to reduce this. ACC Bridger responded there is always more to be done, but an exceptional amount of work has been and continues to be delivered in this area, and the number of engagements with children within Suffolk could not be much higher. The Chief Constable added that West Yorkshire have launched the Pol-Ed initiative, with further funding Suffolk could support this type of function. It offers an opportunity for shared engagement alongside education, working with the teachers, rather than the force delivering all of the engagement.
- 4.9 The PCC asked how effective deferred prosecutions are as referenced at point 2.9.5. ACC Bridger explained that deferred prosecutions are based on solid evidence gathered over a long period of time. Having observed a youth justice panel this week it was insightful in terms of how a child can turn to criminality, how the voice of the victim is heard, and the recognition that criminalising children is not necessarily the best way of ensuring they stay

out of trouble. This needs to be considered on a case-by-case basis, enabling professionals to have these discussions to help these young individuals.

- 4.10 The Policy and Commissioning Officer queried the figures at point 2.10.1, compared to the previous report results it showed a rise in Young People in custody. ACC Bridger will check the figures in both reports and confirm.

**ACTION – ACC Bridger to check the figures at 2.10.1 for Young People in Custody against the previous report and confirm if this is accurate.**

## **5 Neighbourhood Crime and ASB (Paper AP24/48)**

- 5.1 ACC Bridger highlighted that a downward trend is being seen for reports of ASB (Antisocial Behaviour), and that the shared governance being used for problem solving and use of civil orders are having a positive impact. Operation Spotlight is an excellent initiative, maximising the benefits from hotspot policing. Funding has enabled over 2000 additional hours to date, with a further 9000 hours planned for completion by the year end. Work includes creative use of social media campaigns, plus enhancement around traditional CCTV in certain hotspot areas. Residential burglary is a key issue, and the data is showing some positive trends with a 12% reduction in this area plus stability in solve rates. Robbery is another positive with a reduction of 17% in the county, and an increase of 3% in the solve rate. The figures for motor vehicle crime are not so positive, showing an increase in theft figures and a downturn in solved rates, therefore changes have been implemented and hopefully improvement will be seen in the future. For retail theft the Constabulary is seeing an increase in reporting, however Suffolk has the second lowest figures for this crime type nationally.
- 5.2 The PCC commented that he attended the Suffolk Retail Crime Forum as referenced at point 6.2, which was well-run, and he expressed his thanks to the businesses that supported this event.
- 5.3 The PCC commented that he is very pleased with hotspot policing and the results being seen.
- 5.4 The Policy and Commissioning Officer asked with the pending changes to ASB classifications mentioned at point 2.4, how can the Constabulary monitor the low-level offences, and what are the issues moving forward in terms of assessing and understanding them. ACC Bridger responded that it would be great if these categories could stay the same for as long as possible. However he felt confident in how things are working, with those lower-level trends being identified and pursued if needed by working with other agencies that have responsibility in this area. The Chief Constable added that the system will still go into this level of data locally to identify where partners need to engage.
- 5.5 The PCC asked if there are any areas where other agencies and partners could be more helpful and better coordinated, and what more could be done in terms of lessons learnt and improvements. ACC Bridger responded that there are good joint effects on ASB with strong partner relationships. Progress and areas of improvement have been highlighted within reflective review work. When things aren't working, evaluations are completed on a multiagency basis which would highlight lessons learned. The Chief added that Suffolk is blessed with a community where the public will also address ASB. This is not always the case in other parts of the country, and this should be recognised.

- 5.6 The Acting Chief Executive asked with Single Online Home being diverted to other agencies, will there be a point where it can be identified what the force has lost and what they've gained in terms of ASB reporting. ACC Bridger replied that as the data now sits with other agencies, the data would not be available, but it is something that could be proposed from an understanding perspective.
- 5.7 The PCC asked what the Constabulary can do to prevent car crime. ACC Bridger responded that vehicle design has improved greatly in terms of security, they are much harder to steal and break into. Overall, the levels of car theft are much lower than they used to be. Previously the performance for the force was particularly high and, whilst performance fluctuates, the reduction is recognised. The force is working with partners and industry, targeting patrols and operational activity based on evidence of risk and threat to improve the situation.
- 5.8 The CFO asked if it will be possible to deliver the number of hotspot policing hours forecasted for the second half of the year. ACC Bridger replied that it will be a stretch, the summer was an exceptionally busy period, leaving the workforce strained and not wanting overtime as traditionally seen. It won't be detrimental financially if it is not achieved, however the aim is to deliver despite the challenges. This is one of the reasons the force is keen to explore opportunities within social media campaigns and technology.

## **6 Tackling Serious Violence (Paper AP24/49)**

- 6.1 The PCC commented that the Home Secretary has pledged to reduced knife crime and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) by 50% over the next decade, but to date no detail has been provided as to how this will work in Suffolk. He expressed his concern that going forward, centralised targets could be imposed on the county. He hoped the Home Office looks at individual force data and takes into account the picture in Suffolk.
- 6.2 ACC Bridger highlighted that Tackling Serious Violence remains a challenging area, but the performance locally is good overall and enables issues to be addressed. The Serious Violence duty is important and operates with a multi-agency approach. It has completed a strategic needs assessment identifying the real risks, threats and impact on our communities. The Suffolk Office of Data and Analytics (SODA) has made the data available to direct operational activities. Violence levels within Suffolk are below the national average, and have reduced slightly, with solved rates remaining stable. The force is an early adopter of the Clear Hold Build initiative, having successfully completed a pilot site this is now ready to roll out in two further areas.
- 6.3 The PCC asked what level of gang membership is being seen within Suffolk, as media reports are showing that in metropolitan areas 50% of teenagers have either been victims of violence or witnessed violence. ACC Bridger responded that the term "gangs" should be treated with caution, and the number of gangs identified within Suffolk is small. The force is aware of the impact of gangs from larger metropolitan areas, this is a concern and continues to be an operational focus. Adverse childhood experiences and exposure to violence in childhood can have a huge impact on people's lives, and the force will continue to work with partners when vulnerable people are identified, and to work collectively rather than solely using enforcement, to ensure the best possible results for those children are achieved.

- 6.4 The PCC asked to be kept up to date on the Clear Hold Build meetings that are scheduled around the county, to ensure his office are supporting them.  
**ACTION – ACC Bridger to keep the OPCC informed of Clear Hold Build meetings scheduled across the county and provide updates on progress made.**
- 6.5 The PCC asked if there is a reason for the report including information on the Southern Area at point 4.9 but no information supplied for the East and West areas. ACC Bridger responded that the Southern Area is where Clear Hold Build has been launched and going forward other areas will be included within the report.

**7 Any Other Business**

- 7.1 There was no other business.

*The open part of the meeting closed at 10:37 when members of the public left the meeting.*

**PRIVATE AGENDA**

[A detailed account of the discussions and decisions on the following items is contained in the confidential minutes]

- 8 Closed minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2024** (Paper AP24/50)
- 8.1 The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and approved by the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- 9 Protective Services Command Update** (Paper AP24/51)
- 9.1 Suffolk Constabulary presented this report and invited questions on this report.
- 10 Risk Register / Chief Officer Risk** (Paper AP24/52)
- 9.1 Suffolk Constabulary invited questions on this report.

*The meeting closed at 10:54.*

**Summary of Actions**

<b>Item / Paper</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>
4.3 Supporting Children and Young People	ACC Bridger to provide a copy of the NPCC Children and Young Persons Strategy for discussion, once received.	ACC Bridger
4.6 Supporting Children and Young People	ACC Bridger to update the PCC on the progress being made with missing key information being fed into the MARAC and the feedback to the agencies involved.	ACC Bridger

4.10 Supporting Children and Young People	ACC Bridger to check the figures at 2.10.1 for Young People in Custody against the previous report and confirm if this is accurate.	ACC Bridger
6.4 Tackling Serious Violence	ACC Bridger to keep the OPCC informed of Clear Hold Build meetings scheduled across the county and provide updates on progress made.	ACC Bridger