**OFFICE OF POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR GWENT**

**STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD**

**25th NOVEMBER 2024**

**Present:** **Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)**

J Mudd – Police Crime Commissioner (PCC) (Chair)

S Curley – Chief Executive (CEx)

D Garwood-Pask – Chief Finance Officer (CFO)

S Slater – Head of Strategy (HoS)

R Guest – Head of Communications and Engagement (HoCE)

S Howells – Standards and Governance Officer (SGO)

**Office of the Chief Constable (OCC)**

M Hobrough – Temporary Chief Constable (T/CC)

N Brain – Temporary Deputy Chief Constable (T/DCC)

N McLain – Temporary Assistant Chief Constable, Organisational (T/ACC Org)

M Coe – Chief Finance Officer (CFO)

N Brennan - Director of Joint Legal Service (DoJLS)

K Thomas – Senior Manager, Business Change (SMBC)

A Quartermaine – Head of Human Resources (HoHR)

J Everson – Unison

The meeting commenced at 13:30pm.

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| 1. **APOLOGIES**   Apologies for absence were received from E Thomas, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC), J Regan, Head of Assurance and Compliance (HoAC), E Lionel, Principal Finance and Commissioning Manager (PFCM), V Townsend, Temporary Assistant Chief Constable (T/ACC - Operations) and L Bartley, Superintendent, Continuous Improvement (Supt. CI)  The PCC advised that the format and timings of future Strategy and Performance Board meetings would change following this meeting. | **Action** |
| 1. **MINUTES & ACTIONS** |  |
| We received and confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 10th September 2024. We agreed they were a correct record.  The CFO (PCC) stated that at the bottom of page 6 of the minutes under the Financial Performance report item should read ‘Assuming the staff pay award would match that of officers and if the government did not fund it, the force would need to find the difference between the 4.75% award and the 2.5% budgeted’ instead of 3.5%.  The PCC gave thanks to everyone for completing the actions from the previous meeting held on 10th September 2024.  The CC advised that some of the actions would be captured and picked up as part of the HMICFRS Inspection. | **CFO (PCC)**  **Action** |
| 1. **HMICFRS PEEL INSPECTION REPORT INCLUDING THE ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE REPORT AGAINST THE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN PRIORITIES AND THE ANNUAL REPORT ON DATA QUALITY** |  |
| 1. **HMICFRS PEEL INSPECTION REPORT**   The T/CC introduced the Police Effectiveness Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) report advising that 9 out of 17 Areas for Improvement (AFI) from the 2021/22 inspection had been closed with the remaining 8 outstanding. In relation to stop and search, the T/CC highlighted there was 1 AFI currently being reviewed by HMICFRS and assured us that there was an early indication that inspection feedback was positive.  The T/CC discussed the Victim Services Assessment (VSA) recommendations, advising there were 2 ongoing regarding responding to the public. Progress was encouraging as the force’s current emergency and priority response times were very good but these would not be captured until the next inspection period.  We were guided through the 3 AFIs for protecting vulnerable people, with the T/CC asking us to note all of the work that had been done by the Domestic Abuse (DA) safeguarding teams and Public Protection Unit (PPU) in recent months. We were advised that HMICFRS would be interested in the force’s improvements in Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS) and Clare’s Law applications.  The T/CC advised the board that the PEEL inspection process currently being undertaken appeared to be relatively positive compared to the previous inspection.  The T/DCC asked us to note there was 1 ongoing area for stop and search in relation to scrutiny panels. They stated that due to the cancellation of panels only a small number of cases had been reviewed. The CEx added that the legitimacy scrutiny panel was coordinated by the Policy Officer in the OPCC, but as they were reliant on volunteers to assist with the process, issues with availability meant there had been fewer meetings than anticipated.  The PCC queried if the force had changed their approach and done anything differently for the latest inspection. The T/CC stated there had been a one force approach with consistency of messaging from the leadership team. There had also been honest reflection with focus placed on areas of concern.  It was highlighted that Crime Data Integrity (CDI) stood at 70% compliance approximately 5 years ago, however, the repeat messaging in relation to improving this area had an impact which enabled the force to start recording more effectively with current compliance standing at 95.59% split across three areas. The Senior Manager, Business Change (SMBC) asked us to note that from the latest HMICFRS inspection, Sexual Offences figures stood at 98% and Violence figures at 94% with no AFIs.  The T/DCC informed us that the one force approach, as well as scrutiny twice daily, had given Chief Officers a better understanding of where there were issues across the organisation.  The T/ACC Org highlighted that the force was now at a point where staff realised that improvements could be made in the way they work which had started to create a culture of continuous improvement. The proposed operating model could also see improvements made due to it being more prescriptive in terms of the areas staff were accountable for.  The PCC asked the T/CC how they thought leadership messaging would cascade down through teams in the force. The T/CC highlighted that Superintendents and Chief Inspectors Boards had taken place and the Inspectors Board would be held before the end of the year. They added that all of those involved in the Boards would have had a personal brief on what was expected of them in the role they would be undertaking.  The T/CC advised the force was trying to prepare the workforce for the future by providing big force programmes of training, working with the College of Policing on leading inclusive teams to embed neighbourhood policing principles.  The T/ACC commented that leadership started with the Chief Officer team, advising that it was important that the force continued with that approach.  `  The T/DCC told us that it was important the workforce understood why there was a need for change in order to support it. They used the example of a positive change made to how calls were recorded, providing officers more time to investigate due to demand being reduced.  The PCC was pleased to note the good progress the force had achieved, especially within the FCR. | **Action** |
| 1. **ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE REPORT AGAINST THE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN PRIORITIES, QUARTER 2, 2024/25**   The T/DCC took us through the Organisational Performance Report against the Police and Crime Plan priorities for quarter 2 of 2024-25.  The PCC told us there was a conversation at the Gwent Criminal Justice Board relating to issues involving performance. They advised there was a concern regarding high numbers of victim attrition and queried if there was anything more the force could do to address these issues.  The T/DCC advised that honest conversations with the judiciary were key. They used rape trials as an example explaining that they were being overlisted, leading the rape victim to wait nearly a year for a trial date at times and then the hearing being cancelled due to a lack of availability. The T/DCC made us aware there had been conversations with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), however, there was no further progress. The T/DCC asked us to note that they would keep raising this issue with the Chief Crown Prosecutor (CCP) to highlight the impact this was having on victims.  The T/CC expressed their concern around a conversation with the CCP relating to IT systems not being compatible and over listing of trials. They assured us that this had been taken away as an action by the CCP.  We were asked to note that the Victims Superintendent role being put in place was a welcome addition and would help with ensuring victims were updated.  There were ongoing conversations regarding the importance of opportunities for out of court disposals and other forms of criminal justice outcomes to be considered where appropriate, rather than going to court.  The PCC queried if there were any gaps in relation to Domestic Abuse (DA) crimes that could be addressed through commissioning. The T/DCC suggested perpetrator management would be a key area, however, the force struggled with identifying appropriate repeat offenders for support and onward referral.  We were told by the PCC that there was concern around prevention and early intervention with young people and that further conversations would take place regarding those issues. They commented that the force needed to develop a whole system approach and there were ongoing discussions around that. The PCC talked about the layers of partnership the force had but stated that due to things not being closed off, when a problem developed, there needed to be a clear route for escalation to solve a problem. We were told that going forward, those issues would be discussed at the Public Service Board (PSB).  The PCC talked about trust and confidence asking how the force could amplify the positives through partners to impact positively on public perception. The T/CC advised there were areas across Gwent that had particular issues and talked about focussing on geographical areas where the force, along with multiple partners could put their assets and investment; it was important that communities were also included so that they felt like they were part of it. They stressed this would need to be a continual piece of work by all involved. This would be raised at the next PSB. | **Action**  **T/CC** |
| 1. **BUDGET BID TO PCC**   The CFO(CC) introduced the Chief’s Budget Bid for 2025/26 and the5 year financial plan. They advised there were two main themes, Revenue Budget and Capital Budget.  We were assured that the force was on an improvement journey and needed to continue investing to improve their response to increasing demand. The force also needed to adopt a different approach to the Capital programme in relation to the affordability aspect that had been discussed at Estates Strategy Board (ESB). They added that it would be best to pause until the estate strategy was ready.  The budgetary requirements for the period of the Medium Term (5 Year) Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2025/26 was £183.803 million. This was an increase of £9 million compared to the previous year due to factors such as an increase in pay awards and national insurance.  We were told there had been assumptions made within the budget in terms of interest costs and grants from the UK Government which meant the force’s cost pressures were neutral for this year.  The CFO (CC) asked us to note that the force would be facing a £10.512 million recurrent deficit in 5 years. Looking forward, the updated financial gap would be £4.979 million after savings for 2025/26.  In terms of the Capital expenditure, we were told this investment would realise long-term cashable and non-cashable benefits which would be appropriate and more sustainable.  The CFO(CC) informed us there was a large number of national level priorities relating to local policing performance, including the extra 13,000 Police officers, staff and Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) required within neighbourhood teams.  We were advised that the force needed to consider four key priorities for 2025/26; finalising future custody provision, the collaborative firearms range, implementation of the new Operational Policing model and continuing to implement Right Care, Right Person with partners.  The CFO(CC) informed us that the Chancellor’s Autum Budget statement on the 31st October 2024 provided a number of significant changes including additional funding of £5 billion to the Home Office. This did not give any indication of how much of the additional funding would be allocated to policing. They did however tell us that it identified an extra £1.9 billion for the Ministry of Justice to help fund additional court days.  The CFO(CC) asked us to note that due to an increase in Employers’ National Insurance contributions increasing by 1.2% to 15%, an extra £2.5 million had been added to the force’s budget. There was currently no guidance on if the public sector would be compensated for this increase. However, in previous years, the force had been provided with a specific grant to offset any increases. We were told that the force had assumed in the budget that it would be cost neutral and that they would receive the £2.5 million grant from the Home Office.  In terms of the revenue budget, the CFO(CC) highlighted that the force had assumed officer and staff pay awards of 3% and non-pay inflation of 3% in 2025/26. In relation to the Capital programme, they advised the budget only included essentials such as the firearms range, expansion by 10 additional cells at Ystrad Mynach Custody Unit and the development of property stores in Bettws. We were informed that the capital programme had been reduced from last year and was currently running at £47.8 million over a 5 year period, compared to £105 million last year, however, this did mean that borrowing had also decreased.  We were informed that advice provided by our treasury management advisors was to borrow short term and wait for interest rates to decrease which had led the force to assume a borrowing cost of £16 million between 2025/26 and 2029/2030.  The PCC queried the statement that the force would have ‘the equivalent of a PCSO in every ward’. The CFO(CC) asked us to note that recently some PCSO’s had been undertaking other duties and had not been based in neighbourhoods. They advised this was not reflected within the data and explained that these were categorised differently. We were told there were 127 neighbourhood wards with a baseline of 119 PCSOs, 16 being in other categories such as rural crime, cybercrime and Next Generation partnerships.  There was a discussion around pay increases and the PCC asked if Gwent Police was a real living wage employer; it was confirmed that they were. The CFO(PCC) advised that measures were being put in place by the Procurement Department to ensure Gwent Police was also a living wage contracting business. They confirmed they would bring back an update of analysis from Procurement.  The PCC asked if the force had any analysis on what Gwent Police’s share of the 13,000 officers was and if this was built into the Budget bid. We were told that the share of funding was usually 1% and the force had been working on the basis that there would be an extra 130 officers for Gwent. There was expected to be a two phase approach to implementation. On a national basis, Phase one would include moving the 3,000 redeployed officers and placing them into neighbourhood policing which would take effect in June 2025. The remainder would be made up of 4,000 PCSOs, 3000 officers and staff, and 3,000 specials and volunteers to reach 13,000 although this had not been accounted for in the report. The CFO(CC) added that only 25% of the budget was non-pay related and of that 25%, 83% was already undertaken collaboratively.  The PCC expressed their concern about the further impact of any re-purposing of Gwent funding and the effect it would have on the overall budget and stated that the proposal for clearing the deficit of £4.6 million from reserves was concerning. She stated that there needed to be more work done in this area to identify further savings. | **Action**  **Action**  **CFO (PCC)**  **Action** |
| 1. **The information contained in the report(s) below has been subjected to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Data Protection Act and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent’s public interest test and is deemed to be exempt from publication under Section 7.** |  |
| **5a)** **STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER**  The PCC queried if a RAG rating could be added to the Risk Register document to create easier reading. The SMBC confirmed they had spoken to the Inspector, Governance and Assurance (Insp G&A) to see if the format of the risk register could be amended to add a RAG rating in.  The T/DCC provided us with an overview of the high and medium risks and assured us that controls and mitigation were place for all risks. We were also told that many of the risks are also considered at Chief Officer led meetings.  We were advised there had been significant progress in terms of CDI and the Professionalising Investigation Programme 2(PIP) Detective Constable recruitment. We were also informed that there was an issue in relation to retention of staff, but this was something the force were working on.  The Global Data Store was brought to our attention with the T/DCC stating that this was still an issue, however, there work was ongoing in this area.  We were asked to note that there was now a standalone Culture Board and a new culture strategy in place.    The CFO(CC) advised that the Financial Outlook 2024 risk, had now been superseded by the 2025/26 financial position.  The T/DCC asked us to note there was a briefing being prepared for Chief Officers about next steps that would be shared in the next couple of weeks regarding the Force Control Room Systems.  We were advised that work continued in relation to Go Safe Funding and a meeting had been scheduled to discuss additional funding from Welsh Government.  In terms of Strategic Workforce Planning, there was now good scrutiny in place around workforce numbers, although the force needed to get a clearer picture of the skillsets of the staff within the force.  The CFO(PCC) asked if there was confidence in managing the risk around evidential storage. The T/ACC Org stated that the amount of storage was decreasing, however, it would be useful to undertake work to ensure staff were aware of what did and did not need to be placed into evidential storage.  The PCC queried if there was a confidence that handovers between employees moving roles and those leaving the organisation and their replacements were taking place to ensure there was a transfer of organisational history. The T/DCC did advise there was an issue of corporate memory and that this was something the force needed to look into more. The CEx asked if there would be handovers for things that were not usually in a document form. The T/ACC Organisational confirmed this would be the case going forward. | **SMBC**  **Action**  **T/DCC** |
| 1. **CODE OF PRACTICE FOR ETHICAL POLICING**   The T/ACC Org introduced the report on the Code of Practice for Ethical Policing. They advised that the code of practice for ethical policing was a statutory requirement for Chief Officers. The CEx asked how the Chief Officers would ensure this was being implemented force wide.  The SMBC advised that Chief Officers were the allocated strategic owners with support provided by and actions allocated to Heads of departments. Compliance with the Code would feed into the Culture Board and then into the formal Chief Officers Team (COT) meeting so that the T/CC had oversight on progress with the delivery plan that had been implemented. |  |
| **6. The information contained in the report(s) below has been deemed not to be subject to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Data Protection Act and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent’s public interest test and is not deemed to be exempt from publication under Section 7.** |  |
| **7a. ESTATES STRATEGY ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24**  We received the Estates Strategy Annual Report 2023/24 from the CFO (CC).  The CFO(PCC) highlighted that the financial considerations piece wasn’t included last year but the revenue budget of the estate used to be included. They advised that a version from 2 years ago included a matrix which would be useful to include as it could help identify capacity issues around the staffing model.  We were asked to note some presentational issues within the report. There was a reference to an annex 1 but no annex attached and the report referenced an estate strategy review in paragraph 2.2 which was a year out of date. The CFO(CC) would send an updated version to the OPCC.  The CFO(CC) queried if there was a timeline for charging staff who charge their cars. A response would be sought from the Head of Estates and Facilities (HoEF).  The CEx highlighted that scrutiny of this report should be considered as part of the new governance arrangements. They advised ESB was not in the public domain, however, this could be a consideration as part of a wider review. | **Action**  **CFO (CC)**  **CFO (CC)** |
| **b) FORCE ENGAGEMENT REPORT**  We received the Force Engagement Report by the T/CC.  The PCC asked where the force was going in the future with the engagement model. The SMBC asked us to note that the model would look different in the future and would feed into the force engagement board, ensuring the outcome of the annual report would be in line with the new engagement strategy. They added that the Chief Superintendent, Engagement (Supt. Engagement) was currently working on the engagement strategy.  The T/CC made us aware that the strategy was aiming to break down the perception that engagement work was not a fundamental part of policing. They added that historically officers had not seen it as an integral part of their role. |  |
| **c) STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK**  We received the Strategic Risk Management Framework Report by the T/CC.  The PCC asked the force to note that there were some aspects in the framework that overlapped with the OPCC and some of the governance arrangements detailed had now changed. The SMBC advised they would re-look at the framework. | **SMBC** |
| **7c. COERCIVE POWERS**  The T/CC introduced the Coercive Powers report and advised this report provided a breakdown on disproportionality rates and provided assurance that the work the force was undertaking was in line with statutory requirements. |  |
| **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**  There was no other business discussed. |  |
| **The meeting concluded at 16.00.** |  |