

OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER	
LEAD CHIEF OFFICER:	ACC Edwards
TITLE:	COVID 19 Recovery Update
DATE:	3rd September 2020
TIMING:	Exceptional Report
PURPOSE:	For monitoring
1.	<u>RECOMMENDATION</u>
1.1	To note the briefing item below.
2.	<u>INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND</u>
2.1	The purpose of this report is to provide the OPCC with an update as to force planning and activity in the recovery phase of COVID-19.
3.	<u>ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION</u>
3.1	<p><u>Recovery Planning-</u> The force has established a Recovery group which meets every three weeks following each Welsh Government review. Each area of the force is represented at the meeting, which is chaired by a Chief Superintendent. Each business area has a recovery plan which is monitored through the group and updated regularly by the plan owners. The group monitors risks and attends to changes to legislation, Health and Safety, wellbeing, return to work and service provision.</p> <p>It's stated aims are to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enable the Force and its departments to return to delivering all its services under the conditions of a 'New Normal' during the various phases of the Covid pandemic. • ensure that lessons are learned for operational and organisational planning ahead of similar future challenges. • capture opportunities to improve working practices. • identify and mitigate strategic and tactical risks. • protect the health and wellbeing of staff, by monitoring and complying with Government, NPCC and College of Policing guidance. • monitor and respond to any emerging community cohesion issues.
3.2	<u>Resourcing-</u> The force has dedicated a Chief Inspector to COVID recovery. He is supported by staff from the Continuous Improvement department where necessary.
3.3	<u>Health and Safety-</u> Force PPE stocks continue to be in good supply. The logistics cell which was established through the early months of COVID has been stood down and its functions taken up by the Estates Department as part of its daily business. Front counters which are open to the public have been risk assessed and queuing systems implemented along with 2 metre social distancing instructions on doors, floors and walls. There are hand sanitising

	<p>stations in these areas as well as throughout Police HQ and the wider estate for the use of staff and officers.</p> <p>Where police staff need to return to work, each departmental area has been assessed and re-designed to cater for social distancing (2m distance rule) with appropriate signage and available PPE to ensure it is a 'Covid Secure Environment'. Departmental heads have begun implementing localised roster systems to ensure that office capacity is never contravened. The force has provided equipment to staff who have an exceptional need or require a reasonable adjustment, and is currently considering the provision of a system for other staff to purchase equipment.</p>
3.4	<p><u>Working from Home-</u> The force remains committed to Welsh Government guidance which is that staff should work at home unless it is not practicable to do so. As detailed in earlier reports, the force was well placed to implement agile working as a result of its existing mobile IT capabilities. Line managers are expected to check in regularly with staff and to request DSE assessments where the appropriateness of the workplace may be in question. Generally, the expectation has been that the job of a police officer cannot be done from home and there has been a greater expectation that they work from their usual workplace.</p> <p>The Force Recovery Group will continue to monitor any changes to Welsh Government guidance and encourage staff to return to its Covid Secure estate once it is deemed safe to do so. Departments have already planned for this by identifying new office capacities and developing plans that include a mix of working from home, agile working and office working on a rota basis. In areas of business where staff cannot work from home (such as the Force Communications Suite), Perspex screens have been installed to help prevent spread of the virus.</p>
3.5	<p><u>Wellbeing-</u> The force is conscious of the demands placed upon staff working from home for extended periods, particularly for those who have needed to shield. It has adopted an all Wales risk assessment tool to ensure it provides the right level of support and advice to those who may be vulnerable.</p> <p>The Force has improved its wellbeing offer to staff through COVID by approving a new staffing model with two dedicated Wellbeing officers. It has a dedicated Wellbeing section on its Intranet homepage. It holds a weekly Wellbeing Teams call at 10 am each Friday, which discusses a wellbeing topic for the first half of the meeting followed by a period of peer support. The force has also signposted advice to staff about pressures that are particular to lockdown such as childcare, managing alcohol and physical fitness. The force also intends to reopen its staff gyms in August, and has undertaken thorough cleaning of equipment, installed sanitising and hand cleaning stations and put up appropriate advisory signage.</p> <p>Absence, including Covid related absence, remains low and is tracked each day at the Force Daily Management Meeting.</p> <p>The force is currently undertaking an intranet survey to gauge staff feedback, wellbeing and views on its response to COVID. It is also undertaking a 'Fairplay' employer survey through the charity, 'Chwarae Teg' and will undertake its more detailed holistic annual staff survey in the Autumn.</p>
3.6	<p><u>Transparency-</u> Under the coronavirus regulations, organisations are required to provide information to those entering or working at premises about how to</p>

	<p>minimise exposure to coronavirus. Welsh Government have encouraged all organisations to demonstrate to their workers and service users that they have properly assessed their risk and taken appropriate mitigating measures.</p> <p>The force's Health & Safety advisor has overseen all of the work conducted to date and is satisfied that the force estate is Covid secure and that there is sufficient information available through the force website and signage throughout the estate. Staff Associations have been involved throughout this process.</p> <p>The force Corporate Communications department has issued bi-weekly updates to staff and also hosts a dedicated Coronavirus web page. It has kept the public up to date through social and traditional media with its LRF partners and has received positive feedback from members of the public and local politicians.</p>
3.7	<p><u>Track and Trace-</u> Testing processes are now well established and seamless. The force has worked with Public Health to develop a Track, Test and Protect policy for its staff. Where a staff member self isolates due to Covid symptoms, line managers conduct an early case conference to identify and risk assess colleagues and members of the public they had been in contact with over the 48 hours prior to them developing them symptoms. This allows a swift response if the staff member subsequently receives a positive test. The force has had 17 positive tests since March, the last of which was on the 21st April 2020.</p>
3.8	<p><u>Leadership-</u> As stated, police leaders have remained visible to staff both in the workplace and through TEAMS. The Chief Constable has held staff webinars where she has invited live time comment and challenge from staff. Chief officers now produce a weekly vlog to update staff as to force developments and provide direction. New Chief Superintendents have been recruited externally to both East and West LPA's and both have now begun work at Gwent Police.</p>
3.9	<p><u>Recruitment and Promotion-</u> The force has undergone socially distanced promotion processes at Chief Superintendent, Superintendent and Inspector ranks. It has also recruited a new Head of People Services through this process. Interviews for police officers and staff have restarted but are now routinely conducted online.</p>
3.10	<p><u>International travel-</u> The force has developed a policy to enable staff to understand the provision of travel corridors and understand the risks associated with travel abroad and the potential of such corridors to be removed at short notice.</p>
3.11	<p><u>Regional and Collaborative Work-</u> A Chief Superintendent continues to chair the SCG which now meets on a weekly basis. Gwent Police are a member of the Gwent Recovery Group that is chaired by Newport City Council. The force also remains part of the Welsh Regional Police Recovery forum, the Joint Emergency Service Group and maintains strong partner links through liaison and meetings with Welsh Government.</p>
3.12	<p><u>Community Cohesion-</u> A previous report has been submitted about the force response to Black Lives Matter. Throughout COVID recovery, the force has continued to seek advice from its Independent Advisory Group (IAG). It has also bolstered the IAG by undergoing a round of recruitment to expand its membership and make it even more diverse. Meetings through TEAMS have</p>

	<p>proved very successful and have allowed the IAG to meet more effectively and regularly through the period.</p> <p>In July, the Chief Constable held a TEAMS meeting with the PCC, Deputy PCC and members of our communities that focussed on equality in light of recent events including the BLM movement. The Chief and PCC took questions around policing tone and style and how the force engages with our communities. Senior leaders have been asked to take time to watch the recording of the meeting.</p> <p>As per previous reports, the force recognised there was disproportionality in its issuing of COVID related fixed penalty notices. It has now established a Gold group chaired by a Chief Superintendent to improve the way it responds to all matters of diversity, inclusion and equality.</p>
3.13	<p><u>Finance-</u> To the end of June, the cost of COVID 19 to the force is estimated to be £665,000. Over £400,000 of this is related to PPE and discussions with the Home Office about reimbursement are ongoing. There are also likely to be cost savings in some areas (for example, fuel and vehicle maintenance).</p>
3.14	<p><u>Future planning</u> The force remains strongly linked to partners, including public health, and monitors the infection rate across Gwent through the SCG and RCG. The force has the ability to quickly revert to the Gold command structure implemented during the first wave of COVID, although this is likely to be less resource intensive give that many of the duties of many functions (such as logistics, IT) have become part of daily business for the force. Business Continuity plans remain in place and detail how each department would manage demand through staff shortages caused by a second wave.</p> <p>The force is also cognisant of the impact that Brexit may bring alongside COVID, and has allocated a Chief Superintendent to help identify and manage associated risks.</p>
3.15	<p><u>Learning the Lessons-</u> The force has maintained its Lessons Learned register and has marked whether innovations and changes recorded should be “Adopted, amended, accelerated or abandoned”. This is an ongoing process and will be reinforced with the introduction of a ‘Learning the Lessons’ meeting chaired by the Head of Standards in September 2020.</p>
3.16	<p><u>Inspection-</u> HMICFRS have notified the force of their desire to restart Inspection activity in the Autumn and New Year. There will be a national inspection on the response to COVID and the force is undertaking preparations should Gwent be one of the forces selected.</p>
3.17	<p><u>Performance-</u> The force has redesigned its approach to performance monitoring during the COVID crisis and is now more focussed on crime prevention, reduction and on achieving positive outcomes for victims. This is reflected in the performance reports it produces internally and for partners. Recorded crime levels are down by 13% year on year.</p>
4.	<p><u>NEXT STEPS</u></p>
4.1	<p>For the Recovery Group to continue to work toward its stated aims. Further update reports can be provided to the OPCC through the Forward Planning Index if required.</p>

5.	<u>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</u>
5.1	None
6.	<u>PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS</u>
6.1	None
7.	<u>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</u>
7.1	None
8.	<u>EQUALITIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS</u>
8.1	This project/proposal has been considered against the general duty to promote equality, as stipulated under the Strategic Equality Plan and has been assessed not to discriminate against any particular group.
8.2	In preparing this report, consideration has been given to requirements of the Articles contained in the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998.
9.	<u>RISK</u>
9.1	Potential reputational risk to the force and to public confidence if activity is not managed effectively.
10.	<u>PUBLIC INTEREST</u>
10.1	To be made available to the public
11.	<u>CONTACT OFFICER</u>
11.1	CS Nick McLain
12.	<u>ANNEXES</u>
12.1	None

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Office of the Chief Constable

I confirm that the above report has been discussed and approved at a formal Chief Officers' meeting.

It is now forwarded to the OPCC for **approval / information / monitoring purposes.**

Signature:



Date: 24/08/2020

Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent

I confirm that I have considered whether or not I have any personal or prejudicial interest in this matter and take the proposed decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct.

The above request has my approval.

Signature:

Date: