



## **GLOUCESTERSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL**

**MINUTES of the meeting of the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel held on Friday 8 September 2023 commencing at 10.00 am.**

### **PRESENT MEMBERSHIP:**

Cllr Ray Brassington	Cllr Martin Percy
Cllr Philip Burford	Cllr George Porter
Cllr Dr Collette Finnegan	Cllr Steve Robinson
Cllr Joe Harris	Stella Tams
Kingston Myles	Cllr Brian Tipper
Cllr Sajid Patel	

**Virtual Attendance:** Cllr Flo Clucas

### **2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a correct record.

### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

3.1 Nick Evans, the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, declared his role as chair of Safer Gloucestershire.

### **4. GLOUCESTERSHIRE LOCAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE BOARD**

4.1 The Chair invited Victoria Bishop, Local Criminal Justice Board Co-ordinator, to give an overview of the work of the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB). The key points included:

- The LCJB is made up of His Majesty Prison & Probation Service, Crown Prosecution service (CPS), His Majesty's Courts & Tribunal Service, Gloucestershire Constabulary, Officer of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire (OPCC), Gloucestershire Youth Support Team, Magistrates, Defence and Legal aid.
- The board is chaired by Chris Nelson, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the focus of the board is to get each aspect of the Criminal Justice System to work collaboratively.

*Minutes subject to their acceptance as a correct record at the next meeting*

- The five priorities of the LCJB were listed as Reducing Reoffending, Criminal Justice Performance, Victims and Witnesses, Violence and Intimidation against Women and Girls and Anti-Discrimination.

For more information on the individual aspects of the LCJB, please see the presentation in the agenda reports pack.

- 4.2 In response to a member question about regional LCJB collaboration, the Officers confirmed that there was a system of strategic collaboration through the National Criminal Justice Board. It was also highlighted that the five forces within the South West worked together operationally, particularly on larger issues such as drugs and rural crime. The Commissioner emphasised a new scheme of homes being built by prisoners on day release which had been a collaboration between the different forces.
- 4.3 Whilst it was emphasised that the LCJB's purpose was to escalate issues, it was noted that it also created strategic improvements. The officer gave an example of a research project that was undertaken into the theoretical lifecycle of an investigative file that was completed by the Constabulary and sent on through the criminal justice system. It was stated that some of the recommendations that were published because of that research, had been utilised to improve quality within the Constabulary.
- 4.4 When asked about the LCJB's focus on reducing reoffending, the officers stated that it was an important focus for them, and they had employed 6 full-time staff members and had 30 volunteers to help achieve its aims. It was emphasised that Gloucestershire's Restorative Justice (RJ) programme had a good reputation.
- 4.5 In response to a member question, the officers confirmed that they were taking the 'Public Health Approach' to crime meaning that they were focusing on the individuals who had the potential to commit an offence before the offence was committed. Projects such as the BOOST programme were created to get Sixth formers to talk to primary school children about respect. Other programmes included educational videos about drug dealing, knife crime and consent and a theatre production about toxic male masculinity. The officers confirmed that they strongly advocated for RJ not just being about criminal justice but also building a strong preventative programme.

## **5. SAFER GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

- 5.1 Debbie Powell, Safer Gloucestershire Co-ordinator, was invited by the Chair to give a presentation on the work of Safer Gloucestershire as included in

the report pack. Safer Gloucestershire was formed to create a partnership approach to creating a safer county dependent on the collaboration of all 6 districts. The group was governed by the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act. It was highlighted that each of the 6 district councils had a Community Safety Partnership (CSP) which worked under the umbrella of Safer Gloucestershire. The presentation in the report pack had detailed information on what Safer Gloucestershire had done.

- 5.2 On responding to a member's question about whether there was a correlation between the increase in street gangs and hate crime, the officers suggested that they had not seen a distinct correlation. They believed that hate crime was not the main focus of street gangs, however they did suggest that it did not mean that street gangs never partook in hate crimes.
- 5.3 A member asked why Violence and Intimidation Against Women and Girls (VIAWG) was not a focus of Safer Gloucestershire. The officers confirmed that VIAWG was part of Safer Gloucestershire but had not been included in the presentation. They confirmed that Safer Gloucestershire had two embedded partnership boards (Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board Strategic Group and Sexual Violence Partnership Strategic Group) which were focused on fighting against VIAWG. The officers emphasised that fighting VIAWG was of the utmost importance to them. It was reiterated that the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner had three staff members dedicated to domestic violence and sexual assault.
- 5.4 Focus was also placed on what was being done to reduce anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the rural areas of Gloucestershire as there was a concern that focus was often placed on the cities. The officers confirmed that there was an increasing focus on making sure that youth intervention extended to the rural districts. It was emphasised that Solace (a partnership board between Gloucester City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council and Gloucestershire Constabulary created to prevent and tackle ASB) was in the process of being extended to include the other district councils. The officers also confirmed that a new online reporting system was being created to make it easier for residents to report ASB but that residents should continue to use the 101 service in the meantime.
- 5.5 It was confirmed that the officers would send members the Audit of Crime related issues which the Crown and Disorder Strategy was based on.

**ACTION – Nick Evans**

- 5.6 It was asked what would happen to the funding for Solace once the current funding finished in March 2024, the officers confirmed that the OPCC had

committed to giving extra funding, but they also emphasised that they were still working on options for including district funding.

- 5.7 A member asked about how many Community Triggers had been issued. A Community Trigger is an ASB case review which causes a multi-agency case review if a resident has had to report three formal complaints of ASB within a six-month period to any of the main responsible agencies (council, police and housing provider). The officers confirmed that there had been 22 cases since the Community Trigger process had been introduced. It was hoped that this would reduce in the next few years with the continued focus of the OPCC on tackling ASB within Gloucestershire.
- 5.8 It was further emphasised by officers that residents experiencing ASB should go to their CSP because they are focused on preventing ASB in their district. However, it was confirmed that progress was evident with ASB being reduced by 50% in-Gloucestershire.

## **6. UPDATE FROM POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER (PCC)**

- 6.1 The Commissioner shared the following highlights from his report:
- The focus of the Commissioner since the last meeting had been on resourcing issues, ASB and monitoring the constabulary in their process of exiting the His Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) Engaged Special Measures.
  - The Commissioner noted that having achieved in March 2023 Gloucestershire's quotas (153 police officers) of the 20000 extra officers in the police forces around the country, at the end of September, another 21 officers would be added in addition.
  - The Commissioner confirmed that there was improvement with the Force Control Room, he was very pleased with August's statistics as despite a month of high demand, the average 999 call wait time was 8 seconds (expected to be under 10seconds). However, he did confirm that he would like to see an improvement in the 101-call response time which is currently 5 minutes.
  - The combined community hubs with the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS) were opened in July in Newent and Winchcombe. It was confirmed that whilst this was a trial, two further combined stations would be opened in the future.
- 6.2 Questions were asked as to whether Gloucestershire's police stations were built with reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) following the media coverage on the safety concerns of this material. The officers confirmed that

whilst they were still checking every building, they believed that their police stations had no evidence of RAAC.

- 6.3 When asked about how the OPCC were dealing with shoplifting, it was noted that there was a specific shop-lifting team who were responsible for investigating shop-lifting incidents. It was recognised that there had been a spike in shop-lifting in Gloucestershire and the Commissioner reinforced that the OPCC were trying to find a correct solution on how to combat it. They emphasised the importance of neighbourhood policing and how they were increasing this service in Gloucestershire constabulary because it was seen as a crime preventative. The Commissioner noted that the reporting of shop-lifting did need to be easier for businesses and he confirmed that Safer Streets were trying to create a better reporting system which allowed for the uploading of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) footage.

## **7. OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER - CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT**

- 7.1 This report was taken as read. Due to the Chief Executive absence, the member questions were answered by Chris Nelson, PCC; Nick Evans, Deputy PCC; Becky Beard, Assistant Chief Executive- Partnerships Performance and Accountability and Kirsten Fruin, Assistant Chief Executive - Victims and Commissioning.
- 7.2 A member pointed out a correction that was agreed upon by officers on page 5 of the report under the 3<sup>rd</sup> section of the 'Gloucestershire Crime Overview Table'. The report stated, 'Generally increases in racially/religiously aggravated offences and sexual offences are welcomed as we know these crimes are under reported.' The member highlighted that this suggested that the OPCC welcomed racially/religiously aggravated offences. It was emphasised that this was not the intended meaning. The officers agreed that they would amend the report wording.

### **ACTION – Kirsten Fruin/ Becky Beard to change report wording.**

- 7.3 Answering a member question about the unsafe E-scooter usage in the county, the Commissioner confirmed that he believed that E-Scooters needed more regulation. However, he confirmed that it was often the illegal E-scooters that were being used unsafely rather than the legal ones and this was because the illegal E-scooters were harder to track. The officers confirmed that the Constabulary messaging was that if an illegal E-scooter or E-bike was seen, it would be seized.

**ACTION - to be added to the HMICFRS update at November's meeting**

- 7.4 A member raised concern over a recent poster that had been publicised by the Cheltenham Guardians telling women in Cheltenham to not go out alone at night due to a gang of men. The member was concerned that the messaging was fearmongering and was placing blame on the women rather than the perpetrators. The officers confirmed that the errors with the poster messaging had been raised internally and it was emphasised that VIAWG had not increased in the county but instead was being better reported on. Whilst the Commissioner emphasised the great work that the Guardians did, he emphasised that the messaging was not well worded and did not have the intended effect. The Deputy PCC confirmed that his team had been working on the Words Matter policy to educate organisations on the improving poster wording.

**ACTION - to be added to the HMICFRS update at November's meeting**

**8. WORK PLAN**

- 8.1 No changes to the main work plan items for the November meeting but two items (E-Scooter use/ VIAWG data) were identified as needing to be included.

**ACTION – Democratic Services/ Becky Beard**

**CHAIR**

Meeting concluded at 12.44pm.

To watch the full meeting, please use the following link: [https://gloucestershire.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast\\_interactive/805072](https://gloucestershire.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/805072)