



Philip Secombe
Police and Crime
Commissioner
for Warwickshire

Open Minutes

Performance Accountability Meeting (PAM)

Tuesday 29th March 2022

09:00 hrs to 11:00 hrs

Attendees

No	Name	Ref	Capacity	Person	Teams	Rotate
1	Philip Secombe	PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner		x	
2	Polly Reed	PR	OPCC CEO	x		
3	Alex Franklin-Smith	AFS	Deputy Chief Constable	x		
4	Ben Smith	BS	ACC Local Policing	x		
5	David Gardner	DG	ACC Protective Services	x		
6	Steve Russell	SR	Head of A&SI		x	
7	David Patterson	DP	OPCC Assurance and Scrutiny	x		
8	Lynn Aston	LA	OPCC Secretariat - Minutes		x	
9	Imogen Forrest	IF	OPCC Secretariat - Minutes	x		

Apologies

Name	Ref	Capacity
Debbie Tedds	CC	Chief Constable

Minutes

Reference	Item	Action
01.29/03/22	<p><u>Minutes 22/02/2022</u></p> <p>Minutes of the previous meeting of the 2/02/2022 were deemed an accurate record.</p> <p><u>Actions 22/02/2022</u></p> <p>Arrangements to be made for PCC to visit investigative teams. DP to orchestrate with SB. <i>Discharged: Meeting arranged for 09.04.22</i></p>	Discharged
02.29/03/22	<p><u>Spotlight – Homicide/National Policing Measures</u></p> <p>Topic presented by SR with reference to PowerPoint presentation PAM 02. Key points:</p> <p>In March 2021 the policing minister wrote to all forces introducing the National Crime and Policing Measures which fall under six headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce murder and other homicides • Reduce serious violence • Disrupt drugs supply and county lines • Reduce neighbourhood crime • Tackle cyber crime • Improve satisfaction among victims – with particular focus on victims of domestic abuse. <p>These are set to be monitored on a quarterly basis, against a baseline of June 2019 and measured at a national level and are not scorecards. The Home Office is expecting significant improvement within 3 years.</p> <p>SR went through the force recorded data and those that are required from others, such as the NHS.</p> <p>SR highlighted the Digital Crime and Performance Pack which is a Power BI dashboard that doesn't mirror the data set required.</p> <p>The PCC asked who is requesting this and SR confirmed it has come from the Home Office, but it may be that HMICFRS undertake to look into performance more in future Peel reviews and Specified Information Orders (SIO).</p> <p>AFS advised that each of the organisations that are listed are all represented at a national or regional board which is chaired by the Policing Minister, Kit Malthouse, but each have a different role in implementation.</p> <p>The presentation then concentrated on the reporting of homicides and how the outliers can skew the figures for</p>	

	<p>forces like Warwickshire which have such few cases. PR asked if cases of homicide excluded incidents such as terrorist attacks and extreme events. SR confirmed that this was the case.</p> <p>The baseline data was taken at June 2019, and as at that period Warwickshire only had one homicide so anything after that showed an increase and SR has been in discussion with the Home Office highlighting the limitations of the new approach.</p> <p>SR also explained how reporting on cases under investigation are classed as homicide and out of the 10 cases listed in Warwickshire for 21/22 and how six of the cases will not be classed as a homicide following investigation. Again, SR has challenged this with the Home Office and they are looking to put in a new crime counting regime that would log the death as an incident and only be recorded as a homicide when the investigation has taken place.</p> <p>Finally, SR presented a new approach to reporting and gave examples of how this would look, aligning with the Police and Crime Panel and statutory guidance around the PCC holding to account.</p> <p>DP advised that the APCC had issued guidance on what needed to be included in the SIO, in that a summary evaluation of planned action in the last quarter and also the next quarter needed to be included.</p> <p>Action. DP to send to SR the APCC SIO guidance for information.</p> <p>SR asked if all were happy to proceed. AFS advised that from a force perspective, the CC is content with the proposal as it ensures that both the local performance and Home Office requirements are met.</p> <p>The PCC asked SR if this would change the normal reporting process and SR confirmed that this will be an enhancement and the National Policing Measures can be pulled out and separated. The PCC felt that this information would be useful for the LCJB.</p> <p>DP noted that with the PCC he had attended a meeting with the Home Office and College of Policing regarding homicide rates, where some common themes as to the causes and measures for prevention were identified. DP asked whether discussions had taken place about how the force were looking to reduce homicides. AFS advised that they are working proactively and have a greater focus on prevention, civil orders and conversations are taking place during the Empower</p>	<p>Action¹ 02.29/03/22</p>
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	<p>operational review to ensure that the right resources are in place.</p> <p>It was also agreed that preventing homicides in Warwickshire could only be achieved by working in partnership, with partners such as education, health, WDC, WCC etc. AFS advised that SNTs are undertaking a lot of work currently on safe and welfare checks and preventing vulnerable people coming to harm.</p> <p>The PCC concurred with this and advised that Kit Malthouse stated that it's up to the PCC to adopt a joint approach and work with all partners to help to reduce homicides.</p> <p>In addition to the national measures, there is a CJ scorecard, which is built in different software and only came out last Friday. It is also intended to produce performance data on 999 responses and published the information on the Police.uk website.</p> <p>The PCC thanked SR for his presentation.</p>	
03.29/03/22	<p><u>Specified Information Order</u></p> <p>Item deferred to the FGB meeting.</p>	
04.29/03/22	<p><u>Performance Update</u></p> <p>The contents of the Performance Scrutiny Report for February 2022 were noted with just one question being raised regarding Freedom of Information Requests:</p> <p>Q1. <i>It was noted in the September 2021 Scrutiny Report that the reporting of FOI performance data was a new and positive development. However, the number of FOI requests awaiting conclusion in August 2021 was significantly large (n=131).</i></p> <p><i>In November 2021, a total of 152 FOI requests remained open with only 45% (n=40) of the cases closed that month completed in the 20-day time limit, representing the lowest percentage since February 2021. A pertinent question was consequently posed at the PAM in December 2021, namely:</i></p> <p><i>'The situation with the volume of FOI requests awaiting processing, together with the low proportion of those completed within the required 20-day time limit is a cause for concern. How is this risk being effectively managed and what are the time scales for significant improvement to be made and full compliance with legislated timeframes to be achieved?'</i></p> <p><i>Since this time the number of FIOs awaiting completion has increased, where in February 2022 the figure stood</i></p>	

at 178 FIOs with 44% (n=73) of the cases closed that month completed in the 20-day time limit. The comments in the Performance Report are noted, regarding the five-point action plan that has been implemented to address this position, particularly in respect of the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) recommendations.

Can the ICO recommendations be shared with the OPCC? What are the time scales for an acceptable level of FIO performance to be realised, and what does 'good' look like?

Force Response

Head of Corporate Communication

A written response was provided which is annotated at the bottom of the minutes.

AFS further responded that the force, including the CC are aware of the response rates of FOI requests and this is on the force risk register. For the last 12 months the team has not been fully resourced and there was no real baseline, however the team is now at full complement, but a conscious decision was made to not add additional resource.

Consecutive months saw an increase in the number of FOIs requests with just 45% being concluded each month which is an improvement. Unfortunately, it is not possible to influence the numbers coming through, but a rise can be seen in people using FOI to circumnavigate other channels where they may not have received the response they may have wanted.

A new triage approach recently put in place was working well, which sorts those that may cause a reputational risk or requires closer scrutiny. AFS also said that whilst not a defence, most other forces are in a similar position.

In terms in the scrutiny of FOI these come to the Information and Scrutiny Board who monitor this area of work and utilise the legal framework to filter out those that don't meet the requirements of the Act.

The PCC asked if we were potentially advising people to request a FOI when there are other routes. AFS advised that over the last 12-months this may have happened, however educational work has been undertaken. He

	<p>further advised that the requesting of FOI is now well known and very much in the public domain. AFS concluded by saying that the action plan which Kate Quilley has drawn up does include an action around education.</p> <p>The PCC further asked if we have received any feedback from the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) about the current response rate or specific cases. AFS advised that this has not been the case.</p> <p>PR advised that the OPCC have received a steady amount of FOI requests over the last few months, normally 2 or 3 per month but most of these are operational policing issues and are referred onwards.</p> <p>Reviewing the Performance Report more generally, the PCC commented on the position within the force with some areas improving with others deteriorating, however the conversations have been had and the OPCC will keep monitoring them and will ask further questions as and when a new debate is required.</p> <p>Operations Communication Centre <i>FOIA Exempt FOIA under Section S.31 (Law Enforcement)</i></p> <p>SR advised that the reporting of Outcomes in the Performance Report would change, in that it will now be reported one month in appears to even out the inconsistencies that had been identified in the current practices.</p> <p>Operation Zakynthos <i>FOIA Exempt FOIA under Section S.31 (Law Enforcement)</i></p>	
05.29/03/22	<p><u>Operational Update</u> <i>FOIA Exempt FOIA under Section S.31 (Law Enforcement)</i></p>	
06.22/02/22	<p><u>AOB</u> None raised.</p>	
Agenda Item	Summary Of Actions	Allocated
Action ¹ 02.29/03/22	DP to send to SR the APCC SIO guidance for information.	DP

04.29/03/22 - Freedom of Information response by Kate Quilley

For several months leading up to October 2021 the FOI team were functioning with only one decision maker, 50% of the usual capability, long term absence within such a small team does unfortunately have a significant impact on performance. The team gained a new member of staff early October 2021 who then completed relevant training both externally and internally which was done by the decision maker already in position. This helps to add to context around the lower levels of completed requests over those months. October 2021 was a particularly busy month with a total of 117 new requests.

In November 2021, a total of 90 requests were closed, 40 of which were completed within 20 days and 50 of which were completed outside of the deadline and were older requests to help target the backlog of requests. So, although the figure of 45% might appear low the number of requests closed was consistent and higher than most of the previous couple of months. The decision makers aim to strike a balance between responding to as many requests within the deadline and tackling the backlog of outdated requests, which is not always reflected well in the way the figures are presented.

During February 2022, a total of 73 requests were closed altogether with 55 of those being processed within the 20 working days which equates to 75% compliance rate as opposed to 44% as mentioned above. This is a higher compliance rate than those achieved throughout the whole of 2021 and is an example of how focused and determined the FOI team is.

Fluctuating demand has also proved to be a significant factor in the overall outstanding number of requests, with 5 out of the previous 6 months having received over 90 requests for information. Demand spiked in February (97) which has created a backlog that will require time to work through and sets back the progress made previously. Such a spike could be repeated at any time.

To help us achieve a higher rate of compliance and reduce the number of outstanding requests we have continued to work alongside the ICO toolkit as detailed below. It's hard to answer the question around the timeframe of getting things back on track. We have worked hard at it for some time, and unfortunately due to the speed that new requests come in it is very difficult to make a dent on the total number of outstanding requests.

This issue currently sits on the Information Assurance Board risk register and close scrutiny is given to the figures monthly. The Executive Board determined this was a risk being managed and tolerated and did not require escalating to a force risk at this time owing to the mitigation measures in place.