



**POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER**
for Leicester,
Leicestershire & Rutland
Your Communities - Your Commissioner

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE BOARD

18th March 2024

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1. Overview, attendance & purpose

Overview

Chaired by the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Corporate Governance Board is attended by both the OPCC and the Chief Officer Team who meet roughly every 8 weeks to discuss and highlight the performance of Leicestershire Police force, allowing the PCC to challenge, scrutinise and discuss potential support from the OPCC. Below is a report detailing the discussions of the meeting held on the 18th March 2024.

Attendance

Office of Police and Crime Commissioner

Mr Rupert Matthews (Police and Crime Commissioner)
Mrs Rani Mahal (Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner)
Claire Trewartha (CEO)
Miss Kira Hughes (Chief Finance Officer)
Miss Abbey Dearden (Business Staff Officer)

Office of Chief Constable

Mr Rob Nixon (Chief Constable)
Mr David Sandall (Deputy Chief Constable)
Mr Chris Kealey (Head of Communications and Engagement)
Mr Paul Dawkins (ACO FR)

Apologies – Mrs Lizzie Starr (Director of Governance and Performance)

Mr Adam Streets (ACC)
Mrs Michaela Kerr (ACC)

Purpose

The purpose of the Corporate Governance Board is to allow the PCC to carry out their statutory duty of holding the Chief Constable to account on behalf of the public. The board consists of both reports, presentations and verbal discussions guided by the Chair on key areas such as performance, corporate risk, recruitment, HMICFRS, among other measures. This report is to highlight the main points covered in the latest CBG, in the following format:

- i. Overview of issue (with the exception of repeat financial items)
- ii. Force update/overview
- iii. Police and Crime Commissioner response (where appropriate)

2. Operational Summary

Overview: Summaries of operational performance for the previous 8 weeks is routinely brought to the CGB for the benefit of the Chair, and for interest of the public and police and crime panel.

Force update: The board received a report from the Chief Officer Team (COT) authored by the Executive Support Team. The paper contains a detailed summary of operational activity for the period from the last CGB to the current. The report included updates on the tragic incident involving two-year-old Xielo Maruziva in the River Soar. Thoughts were with the family and friends with the extensive efforts and resources that this operation has drawn on both in Force and from specialist partner agencies. The report also touched on the County Lines Intensification Week, an update on the total arrests as a result of a double shooting in on Evington Road, and the successful conviction of two rapists as a result of robust policing and the testimony from the victim who bravely spoke out against the perpetrator.

The report also provides a corporate overview of the previous 8 weeks, including the rollout of the Leicestershire Police Pledge, engagement activities regarding the budget challenges, preparation for the upcoming HMICFRS PEEL inspection in July, refurbishment of the Occupational Health Offices at FHQ and data transfer to the cloud.

An update on regional operation activity was included in the summary but has been redacted from this report to support ongoing work.

PCC response: CC Nixon emphasised the level of work that this report details and the significance of each update included. Upon thanks from the Chair, CC Nixon queried whether a message could go out to all officers and staff. CEO Trewartha explained that due to the pre-election period beginning two days following the CGB, this would need to be approached sensitively. An action was captured for Sallie Blair (OPCC Comms Lead) to link in with Chris Kealey to discuss what can be shared.

The PCC and CC agreed that findings of the Angiolini Inquiry¹ and implementation of the 16 recommendations be discussed at the next CGB.

¹ An independent inquiry into how an off-duty Met police officer abducted, raped and murdered Sarah Everard. The report makes 16 recommendations to Police Forces nationally.

3. Operational Performance

a. Calls Performance

Overview: Calls performance is currently a priority focus area for Leicestershire Police after it was noted in the summer of 2023 that the standard of performance had declined compared to previous years when looking at average answer times and drop off times.

Force update: The board received a report authored by Supt Bunn (Head of Contact). The report explains that the demand on the contact management department increases year on year, and June of 2023 saw peak demand at 22,378 calls within the month, this is 6,538 more calls than the same month of the previous year. This resulted in a critical incident being declared as demand outstripped capability, which remained in place until January 2024. The report goes on to detail that call levels have stabilised from November 2023 onwards, however remained significantly high compared to previous years. The response to the critical incident included focusing on prevention by extending the approach of 'right person right care' to contact demand, ensuring that callers receive specialised and specific care earlier depending on the nature of the call. The force also altered shift patterns and resources to manage demand. Challenges in recruitment are also detailed, explaining that the private sector call centres offer higher pay, and that the CMD is often a stepping stone for staff into other roles in force, resulting in a high turnover of staff. To manage this, the CMD recruited 79 new starters in 2023, with continued recruitment planned for 2024.

The result of these changes for 2024 mean that Leicestershire Police are in the top quartile nationally for their calls performance. 90%+ all 999 calls between November 2023 and Feb 2024 were answered within 10 seconds. The force currently is not achieving the target 75% of all 101 calls being answered within two minutes, with the highest performing month at 73.7%. The ongoing recruitment and training is scheduled for April 2024 and this should improve the performance for 101 calls.

A Gold group was created last summer and is led by ACC Streets to manage the different workstreams and oversee the improvements.

PCC response: The Chair noted the report. CEO Trewartha asked if there is anything more the Force can do to reduce the turnover. DCC Sandall explained that the challenges are embedded within the nature of the job, for example staff who go elsewhere are attracted by higher salaries and the potential to work remotely which cannot be accommodated in the contact management department for Leicestershire Police. CC Nixon emphasised the competitiveness of salaries for call centre jobs in the private sector. CEO Trewartha noted that it would be interesting to know what the up lift of salary would need to be in order to retain staff, as continuing to recruit and retrain is not cost neutral. CC Nixon raised the concern that increasing this pay may result in CMD staff being paid more than a frontline Police Officer, and that longer term workforce planning is required as uplift is not sustainable nor affordable.

b. Rape Performance

(An appendix report has been produced by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for the benefit of the Police and Crime Panel, detailing the key challenges and how the PCC is supporting the force).

Overview: Rape is a priority area of focus in for Leicestershire Police following an increase in the number of reported rape offences in the most recent year, and a low level of positive outcomes for rape offences².

Force update: The board received a report authored by D/Supt Chris Baker. The report provides an update on the Leicestershire Police arrangements for responding to and investigating rape offences, the changes made to the investigation teams and detailed planned action for responding to this priority area in the upcoming months. A comprehensive overview of the content can be found in appendix item A.

A verbal update was provided also by ACC Kerr to give the Chair an update on the points made within the report. ACC Kerr noted that positive outcomes continued to move in an upward trajectory, and that the force is starting to see a reduction in the number of rapes recorded in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. ACC Kerr highlighted again the two vulnerability boards of which ACC Kerr is the lead, under which the delivery plan is being tracked, challenged, and governed.

PCC response: The Chair queried the average days of investigation length (84 days) and asked whether this was 'good' performance. ACC Kerr explained that this was positive, to which CC Nixon further explained from a national standpoint that this was a positive figure, emphasising the national shortage of lawyers who take on cases relating to rape. CC Nixon explained that certain aspects of rape investigation cannot be controlled by the COT, such as the turnaround time for forensic examination. CC Nixon assured the Chair however that the Force is heading in the right direction.

The Chair queried how our figures compare to the rest of the country. ACC Kerr informed the Chair that the Force is in line with the rest of the country, but local targets aim to improve the Force's outcomes significantly, which is already beginning to happen.

CEO Trewartha explained that she had received some data from the regional SARC Children and Young Peoples referral centre in Nottingham, which showed that the combined total for the last three quarters for referrals was 92 cases, and of which 50 came from Leicestershire. Leicestershire is above the rest of the regions and acknowledged that this may be due to under reporting in other counties. CEO Trewartha queried whether there was any evidence to support the theory that there is under-reporting elsewhere, or whether this was a specific concern for Leicestershire. CC Nixon explained that the same discussion is currently ongoing around kidnapping – reassurance was provided to the board that regional data is being examined. ACC Kerr added that they would be

² Positive outcomes relate to **charges** only. Rape offences should never be dealt with using an out of court resolution.

concerned if the numbers were low, as Leicestershire will be offering victims forensic examination and linking victims with correct supporting agencies including the children's SARC.

ACC Kerr added that the Force is currently in the process of finalising the strategic assessment for Child Sexual Exploitation. The Force are placing it a high priority area for next year.

CEO Trewartha continued to ask about whether any further prevention work regarding rape offences could be done by the Force, and whether a closer look at the themes of these offences could be carried out such as recurring location types, known/unknown offenders etc. CEO Trewartha also raised the concern of courts struggling to move through sexual violence cases. CC Nixon explained through dialogue with the courts, it is his understanding that the courts are prioritising sexual offences and mentioned that the force also have a task and finish group to push for outcomes with sexual offences.

The Chair asked when further updates on the Rape report will be provided to the board, to which the board agreed in 4 months-time to allow two further vulnerability boards to have taken place, and updates from those boards can come to the CGB for the Chair's information.

4. Finance

a. Savings process

Overview: Leicestershire Police are facing a budget deficit of £5.4m due to budget cuts and increasing costs. As part of the ongoing management of the budget deficit, an update paper has been provided to the PCC on the approach to be undertaken to meet the £5.4 million budget gap and other challenges faced by the force in relation to the budget gap.

Force update: The board received a report from DCC Sandall. The report provides a briefing to the CGB on the approach being taken to address the budget gap, reinstate commitments of the Chief Constable to deliver good public service and increase trust, provide an outline of the strategic context, and make recommendations to the Police and Crime Commissioner on how he may support the force's budget process. The report is broken down into strategic context, principles of the planning, non-cashable savings, regional partnerships, non-salary budgets, pay budgets, contingency plans for 2024-2025, governance, communication and resourcing. The report outlines that a 6% vacancy rate (excluding contact management) will be maintained but further vacancy management and reduction of posts will be required to close the budget deficit. It is noted within the report that all carefully made decisions will be aligned to the force's core functions that policing is required to deliver.

The report outlines that the focus is making budget decisions ensure that Leicestershire Police can remain operationally viable and continue to deliver statutory functions. The report states a 'need to use reserves', however ensuring that 'careful consideration is being applied to ensure the sustainability of those reserves in future'. The report goes on to state that the force will seek to continue to achieve the Police Officer uplift requirements of 2298 (Head Count) until September 2024 to prevent a financial penalty to be incurred if the target is not delivered.

The report concludes with a summary, including a five-point request for support from the Police and Crime Commissioner:

1. 'We would request that the Commissioner consider active engagement with Government to address the pay award funding shortfall for 2022/2023 and 2023/24 by re-engaging with the Home Office to have this unfunded award addressed, as it is at the root of the current financial issues.
2. We would request that the Commissioner take a high profile and leading role in highlighting the current inadequate funding arrangements that detrimentally impact on the residents of Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland.

3. We would request the use of reserves to support the transition of the workforce to support the glide path required and to cover any potential severance and redundancy costs.
4. We would request the Police and Crime Commissioner continues to lobby the Home Office to continue covering pension shortfalls and request a multiyear budget settlement that enables a better approach to financial management.
5. PCC to note and endorse the direction of travel.'

PCC response: The PCC acknowledged the recommendations however acknowledged that he could not 'ensure' that future government funding for Leicestershire is increased, nor could he 'ensure' that the Home Office continue to cover pension shortfalls as worded in the force's report. The Chair did however agree to continue to lobby and engage with the government to push for these outcomes and will progress these commitments post-election.

Referring to point 3 above, the Force asked for an agreement in principle to draw down on reserves to allow the Force to cover redundancy costs and explore transition costs.

Point 7.7 of the reserve's strategy outlines that any unbudgeted/unplanned use of reserves will require a business case submitted to the PCC for approval. The PCC stated that any formal decision would need to wait until after election period, and that he would prefer to see a formal presentation of figures and proposals after the election before agreeing to the use of reserves.

In response, the CC explained that if the Force cannot use reserves, the impact would be significant. CC Nixon acknowledged that a formal paper and request can be accommodated at the next CGB but that an agreement in principle now would allow work to begin. The Chair agreed that he was open to the use of reserves for the stated purpose. However, the Chair stated that a final decision would be made on production of a full business case in May that detailed options for the use of the reserves including using them to fund the full costs of this programme, part costs of the programme and implications should the PCC deem it not appropriate to use reserves.

It was agreed as an action for the Force to bring a full paper to the May CGB for discussion and sign off.

b. Reserves strategy

Overview: The reserves strategy is regularly discussed at the Corporate Governance Board to discuss any potential spending and implications. The FMCP states reserves should be held by the PCC and managed to balance funding and spending priorities and to manage risks. This should be established as part of the medium-term financial planning process. The strategy is set out in a way that is clear and understandable for members of the public, and includes:

- how the level of the general reserve has been set;
- justification for holding a general reserve larger than five percent of budget;
- details of the activities or items to be funded from each earmarked reserve, and how these support the PCC and Chief Constable's strategy to deliver a good quality service to the public. Where an earmarked reserve is intended to fund a number of projects or programmes (for example, a change or transformation reserve), details of each programme or project to be funded should be set out.

Force update: The Chair brought the latest reserve strategy paper to the CGB for discussion. A verbal discussion was held around the reserves strategy report. CC Nixon raised a point that when people view a published strategy, that this is what is viewed as a final budget for 2025/2026 and that this could be different to what the actual budget will be.

The Chair stated that the reserve strategy paper outlined intention, rather than commitment to a long-term plan due to being so close to election period. ACO Dawkins explained that there are two parts to the reserve strategy, and that increasing the general reserves makes sense in the long term.

CFO Hughes stated that this will be aligned to come with the budget setting meeting in January 2025 rather than March 2025.

5. HMICFRS

Please note that from this point of the meeting, the PCC handed over to Rani Mahal to Chair.

a. Inspections initial feedback report

Overview: Carried out by HMICFRS, the PEEL inspection is a regular assessment of police forces in England and Wales. Using inspection findings, HMICFRS use professional judgement to assess how good forces are in several areas of policing. Most of these areas are then graded as outstanding, good, adequate, requires improvement, or inadequate. In readiness for the 2024 PEEL inspection scheduled for July, the PCC has been routinely requesting updates from the Force on how they are preparing, and maintaining an overview of forecast grades, and early inspection results.

Force update: The board held a brief verbal discussion regarding the initial feedback from HMICFRS inspections. The Force updated the board that they are officially in pre-inspection stage. CC Nixon informed the board that by July, the Force will be able to present the Transformation Programme to HMICFRS inspectors.

ACC Kerr discussed the Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice Programme (VKPP) which she had attended the week prior to the board. During that meeting a peer review of governance arrangements in the Force was carried out. ACC Kerr informed the board that the de-brief from this review was extremely positive, highlighting the forces systems and processes as good practice. ACC Kerr informed the board that the de-brief report from this review will be available to HMIC also.

DPCC response: CEO Trewartha thanked the board for the update, and queried which areas of the inspection the force is concerned about. CC Nixon responded that the areas of concern were 'call handling (please see previous report outlining issues and planned action), attendance crime and victim's oversight'.

6. Police and Crime Plan

a. Police and Crime Plan – Delivery Report (OPCC Update)

Overview: Director of Governance and Performance for the OPCC Lizzie Starr has authored an in-depth report for the Police and Crime Panel on the Police and Crime Plan Delivery, outlining the 11 main themes of the Police and Crime Plan and how the OPCC have delivered against these, providing a balanced account of delivery to the period ending December 2023. The OPCC have brought the report to the CGB for observation.

PCC update: CEO Trewartha provided a summary of the report for the benefit of the panel.

CC Nixon acknowledged that the report was well put together. CC Nixon further acknowledged that linkages between the PCC and CC could be improved moving forward by increasing conversations. The OPCC share this ambition and wish to publicise more of the PCC/CC discussions for public interest.

CC Nixon raised that there is a sense across that even more could be done to ensure that thanks are given to the Force by the OPCC for the work being done. CC Nixon raised that post-elections it would be beneficial if some of the optics could be shifted this would be better received by those working in policing.

CEO Trewartha responded if it could be seen from a broader perspective how the OPCC supports and enables the Force to carry out duties. CEO Trewartha explained that this support is done through the CGB and supporting the Transformation Programme for example and went on to highlight that through budget setting, the PCC also offers support which therefore enables the Force to accomplish goals, however acknowledged the CC's request and stated that working together to communicate achievements and successes can be looked at going forward. CEO Trewartha concluded by encouraging the Force to bring more areas of success to the CGB meetings as well as areas of challenge to allow the PCC to note formal thanks and hear more of the good work going on.

7. AOB

a. Memorandum of Understanding and Corporate Governance Framework

CEO Trewartha brought a revised version of the MOU (in line with suggested changes informed by best practice nationally, and OPCC's consultation with legal). CEO Trewartha pointed out that all changes had been highlighted in a 'changes' section at the beginning of the document, reducing the need for members to review the document in full.

CFO Dawkins queried whether this would be the final version, and provided assurance that from a Finance and Procurement perspective that this was compliant in current state. CEO Trewartha confirmed and explained that all changes have been logged, however noted that when entering a new political term with or without a new PCC, they will want to refresh all policies for the new term which was understood by the board.

b. Proactive communications

The board received a presentation on Proactive Communications from Chris Kealey. The presentation discussed the below:

- 1) Fully aligned with the Force vision
- 2) Approach and capability
- 3) Integrated into layers
- 4) Evaluation and Learning
- 5) Planning for the future
- 6) Trust and Confidence

PCC response: CEO Trewartha asked how the Force is tracking the progress of the Force Pledge. Mr Kealey responded that Corporate Services SSD have set up KPIs to monitor each point of the pledge.

CEO Trewartha explained the Panel's previous query of how the Force keep a watchful eye on social media, to which Mr Kealey responded that though funding, the Force have a system in place to maintain a central overview of all social media accounts (ORLO). It was explained that the quality and quantity of posts are tracked and shared at a monthly governance meeting.

CEO Trewartha further queried whether any checks on officer's personal social media are carried out. CC Nixon responded that personal social media checks are carried out as part of the vetting process. Mr Kealey explained that there is an up-to-date social media policy and the Force have also prepared an up-to-date Digital Comms plan.

c. [Op Bridger Update](#)

Overview: Operation Bridger is a nationwide police protection security programme in the United Kingdom designed to offer MPs access to extra security in their homes and constituency offices.

Force update: CC Nixon provided a verbal update on Op Bridger in the run up to election period, reinstating that all MPs receive support from Leicestershire police, and they are ensuring that the Force is picking up measures for the PCC also.

PCC response: CEO Trewartha queried whether the Force's local position statement is consistent with others. CC Nixon explained that if other areas positions were different that this would have been agreed locally. CC Nixon went on to explain that Leicestershire Police as a Force follow the national guidance provided by the Home Office. CC Nixon agreed to explore other Force's position statements further, mentioning Devon and Cornwall specifically.

End of meeting

Date of next meeting: 30th May 2024

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