



**POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER**
for Leicester,
Leicestershire & Rutland

Your Communities - Your Commissioner

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE BOARD

30th – 31st July 2024

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6. Homicide Prevention Strategy – agreed for written correspondence on papers only.
7. Recruitment and retention – agreed for written correspondence on papers only.
8. **Operational Summary (redacted)** – agreed for written correspondence on papers only.

Please note that Operational Summary has been redacted as not suitable for public domain.

*Please note that some items were deferred to written correspondence only due to time constraints. Where written correspondence is available, it has been included within this report.

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 30th and 31st July 2024.

Attendance (30th July)

Office of Police and Crime Commissioner

Mr Rupert Matthews (Police and Crime Commissioner)

Mrs Rani Mahal (Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner)

Claire Trewartha (CEO)

Mrs Kira Knott (Chief Finance Officer)

Mrs Lizzie Starr (Director of Governance and Performance)

Mrs Clare Hornbuckle (Evaluation and Scrutiny Officer, minute taker)

Office of Chief Constable

Mr Rob Nixon (Chief Constable)

Mr David Sandall (Deputy Chief Constable)

Mr Adam Streets (Assistant Chief Constable)

Mrs Michaela Kerr (Assistant Chief Constable)

Mr Chris Kealey (Head of Communications and Engagement)

Mr Alistair Kelly (ACO HR)

Mr Paul Dawkins (ACO FR)

Attendance (31st July)

Office of Police and Crime Commissioner

Mr Rupert Matthews (Police and Crime Commissioner)
Mrs Rani Mahal (Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner)
Mrs Claire Trewartha (CEO)
Mrs Kira Knott (Chief Finance Officer)
Mrs Lizzie Starr (Director of Governance and Performance, minute taker)

Apologies

Mrs Michael Kerr (ACC)
Mr Adam Streets (ACC)
Mr Alistair Kelly (ACO HR)
Mr Chris Kealey (Head of Communications)

Office of the Chief Constable

Mr Rob Nixon (Chief Constable)
Mr David Sandall (Deputy Chief Constable)
Mr Paul Dawkins (ACO FR)

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. Urgent Business

Overview: Where urgent business items are discussed at CGB that are of interest to the panel, these will be included here.

Force update: Chief Constable Rob Nixon updated the board that a number of criminal complaints have been made to the Force in regards to the General Election, and that this is a pattern seen nationally. CC Nixon suggested bringing a paper giving the context nationally and issues locally to a future Corporate Governance Board which was agreed by the board.

CC Nixon provided a further update to the board on the five national awards attributed to Leicestershire Police, including an award that was given to a PC for his part in the search for Xielo Maruziva – CC Nixon noted that this PC was nominated externally which is a reflection of their efforts. Other awards included for the Force's mental health triage car and a life-time achievers award for contact management response among others.

PCC response: The PCC and fellow board members noted that this was an excellent achievement for Leicestershire Police and the PCC agreed to circulate congratulations to the Force.

3. Policing in Neighbourhoods

Overview: The PCC requested a report on policing in Neighbourhoods for the May CGB meeting, however due to time constraints in May, this item was pushed back to July 2024.

Force update: ACC Adam Streets informed the board of some Neighbourhood Policing strategic updates made to better support the Force and the public. For example, East Leicester has been split into two NPA areas (Spinney Hill and Keyham Lane) with respective NPA commanders to manage high demand over what was previously one large NPA area. ACC Streets provided updates to the board on changes locally to enhance CID resilience in Force, such as amalgamating smaller CID hubs to one larger hub to better address challenges locally. ACC Streets informed the board that crime has seen a sustained reduction since October 2023, positive outcomes have continued to increase month on month and investigation lengths are improving.

ACC Streets continued to update the board that the Force have been operating with reduced PCSO levels and provided assurance that despite austerity faced by Leicestershire Police and many other Forces nationally, Leicestershire have not compromised in delivering high quality policing to the public.

ACC Streets touched on further demand in Force including protests, sporting events, Download Festival, and Diwali among others.

ACC Streets explained some good practice potential next steps for the Force including instating named individuals with accreditation on problem solving and prevention to areas facing challenges with neighbourhood policing.

PCC response: The PCC queried the 'consistency' around neighbourhood policing described throughout the reporting period in the paper and what this translated to, such as officer numbers or demand figures. ACC Streets clarified that this is in reference to maintaining a service level commitment throughout the past decade of austerity which has been upheld and delivered in Leicestershire. CC Nixon added that there had actually been an increased investment in neighbourhood policing as a key area of importance for public trust and confidence, describing marginal growth over the years.

The PCC stated that he is often asked by members of the public what they can expect from neighbourhood police in terms of service delivery, and that the public look for specific statistics in terms of presence expectation locally. Chris Kealy explained in response the challenges associated with providing specific figures to the public and that each NPA area has very different needs and expectations. Chris Kealey explained that providing specific figures could set the Force up to fail in terms of numerical promises on service delivery. These remarks were echoed by CC Nixon who further added that there is a universal expectation that neighbourhood officers are visible and effective, are problem solving orientated and provide links with victims. Chris Kealey advised the board that communications regarding these more general expectations are already underway to being disseminated through Neighbourhood Link, and advised that updates on the Force expectations as a whole are often more effective and impactful for the public which was understood by the board.

The board noted the potential uncertainty around neighbourhood policing expectations from the Government, anticipating some updates from the Government on this which will need to be considered by the Force and PCC. The board agreed to horizon scan and discuss any announcements when they are made.

The PCC stated that he felt the value of PCSOs was not clearly emphasised enough within the Neighbourhood Policing report, stating that the value of PCSOs to the public is that they're not police officers and are very approachable with members of the community who want to discuss concerns with a representative of the Police who don't feel as authoritative.

The PCC expressed that the role of the PCSO is a very important one and goes beyond that expressed in the paper. They have a vital role in community engagement that is essential to building Trust and Confidence.

4. Force Management Statement

Overview: The annual Force Management Statement is an extensive, internal self-assessment produced by the force. It is based on guidance by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire Services (HMICFRS).

The Force Management Statement (FMS) is a detailed self-assessment of:

- The demand the force expects to face in the future;
- the current performance, condition, composition, capacity, capability, serviceability and security of supply of its workforce, and the extent to which current force assets will be able to meet expected future demand;
- how the force will change and enhance its workforce, policies, practices and other assets to cope with future demand;
- the impact the Chief Constable expects those changes to have and the effect of any residual risk of service failure; and
- how the force has aligned its current financial profile and developed its medium-term financial plan to prioritise and achieve the areas for investment highlighted within the FMS

Force update: The strategic priorities for 2024 are:

- improving service and standards
- finding efficiency and productivity
- investing in the right people with the right skills and wellbeing
- maximising the best tech we can
- reducing demand by working with partners

PCC response: CEO Trewartha informed the board that the OPCC have read through this FMS in detail and will look to align this as closely to the police and crime plan as possible.

5. Finance

a) Year End Treasury Management Report

Paul Dawkins provided a verbal summary of the paper to the board.

PCC response: The PCC queried paragraph 35 of page 8, asking if new projects coming over the next few years will be included in the MTFP, which was confirmed by the board.

b) Sustainability Plan/Closing Budget Deficit

Force update: The paper provided the Chief Officer Team and Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) with a further update on the three-year budget sustainability plan and the specific plans to close the remaining budget deficit to deliver a balanced budget in 2024/25, whilst remaining operationally viable and be able to deliver good service with high standards.

The paper summarised the following:

1. It is recognised that the approach to the budget deficit is complex as it must integrate with retaining operational capability, capacity and delivering service across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, whilst also delivering transformation, organisational enhancements and ensuring we are fit for the future. This requires careful navigation and sequencing over the three-year period.
2. 'Year one' focused on ensuring the foundations for operational success were in place and the efficiency savings delivered exceeded expectation.
3. 'Year two' of the sustainability approach is focusing on significantly reducing the staff establishment to meet the Budget deficit, with 120 posts already removed. At this early stage the required £5.4m of sustainable efficiency savings have been identified and delivered. The current progress is positive in achieving the further £3.2m efficiency savings in-year. The Force has clear plans in place, with contingencies identified to achieve a balanced budget and close the budget deficit in-year.
4. 'Year three' of the sustainability plan will see further requirements for budgetary reduction but may need to involve reductions in Police officer, PCSO and staff numbers to balance the budget. There will be a requirement as we head towards year three to increase the focus further on non-cashable efficiencies. This will include a focus on abstraction time, use of automation and individual productivity. At this stage the focus remains on delivering the in-year budget deficit but is already strengthening the areas of focus for 2025/26 and the plans for 2025/26 can deliver a sustainable budget.

5. The Force would emphasise that Policing in 2024 requires a broad range of skills to be effective. It would be irresponsible to remove or reduce the force's capabilities in specific areas without understanding the disproportional impacts it would have on operational capability. In addition, the force recognises that it needs to continue to invest to be fit for the future.
6. The strategic 3-year approach outlined in the paper is on track. There of course additional in-year pressures and operational challenges, but at this time, subject to unforeseen changes in the circumstances, the plan is on track to be able to close the £8.6 million budget deficit and deliver a balanced and sustainable budget for 2024/25, whilst supporting the financial sustainability into 2025/26.

CC Nixon provided a verbal update with the report, stating that the Force are in very good position in terms of having a sustainable plan and that this was also acknowledged formally by HMICFRS. CC Nixon explained that the Force have exceeded their cash flow and balanced books, saving more money in year 1 of the 3-year reporting period than anticipated. CC Nixon explained that the challenge for the Force currently is how they accelerate in terms of information they've got, explaining that there are several options outlined for year 3 and decisions need to be made in next few months.

PCC response: The PCC queried the definition of a complex Force and how this is determined.

DCC Sandall responded that internally the Force recognise complex elements of local force, but also external bodies such as HMICFRS recognise complex elements of policing in their inspections and publications.

The PCC went on to query the staff volumes. DCC Sandall explained that some temporary posts were created using the reserves to improve performance and manage demand (25 temporary staff posts in CMD). The Force emphasised the good performance in CMD currently but acknowledged the challenge that the Force will face of how performance can be maintained once this temporary measure comes to an end.

Discussion then moved to the financial demand being faced by Forces in relation to housing XL bullies. CC Nixon explained that this was an issue being seen nationally and was placing significant unforeseen demand on Forces. The PCC agreed to write a letter to the new government outlining the concerns raised around the costings of XL bully legislation.

The PCC then went on to discuss the Force's high vacancy rate, querying whether this would impact service delivery. CC Nixon assured the PCC that the Force have done these reviews already and have also looked at transformation within teams to avoid redundancies, for example, shaping how teams and individual roles operate to cover all necessary duties in a more cost-efficient way.

The PCC asked who assess that Leicestershire is one of the 'leanest Force's in the Country', to which CC responded that it was HMICFRS who indicated this. The PCC asked that sources are cited in papers going forward which was agreed by the board.

A discussion was held around the rural crime unit, with the PCC informing the board that he feels this team has helped to improve trust and confidence in policing. The PCC went on to further say that he regularly hears very positive feedback from the public on Leicestershire Police and states that this has increased over the last few years.

16:58 - Meeting adjourned due to time constraints. The remainder of this report relates to discussions held the next working day.

Sustainability Plan/Closing Budget Deficit cont.

Discussion around the sustainability plan continued.

PCC response: The board noted the future uncertainty of government funding to Police and what collaborative engagements could be on the horizon. The board agreed that discussions around the final picture/ambition for the Force needed to take place in alignment with government announcements.

C) Provisional Outturn

Force update: CFO Dawkins presented the paper and updated the board on the highlights:

- There was a regional miscalculation which has reduced the underspend down from £747,000 to £718,000.
- Force underspent by £718,000 against a budget of £230m.
- Police officer establishment was maintained throughout at 2,242 FTE or 2298 headcount.
- The force has averaged a headcount of 150 PCSOs against an establishment of 200 and those 50 vacancies are now being realised as part of the savings plan (£1million). It was highlighted that these savings could have been realised in year but that decision was not made
- Staff vacancies were held at around 120, these were posts with no one in them but held onto the establishment.
- 21 posts were permanently removed as a sustainable saving.
- The Force achieved over £7.8million last year, £3.4million of savings were sustainable into 24/25
- Cost pressures in year can be linked to 7% pay award.
- In year collection from surplus, was a shortfall £240,000, overachievement in efficiency savings enabled the force to absorb that.

Mr Dawkins continued to update the board on three carry forward requests outlined in the paper to be considered by the board, which if they were to be approved would reduce the underspend to £618,000.

PCC response: In relation to the carry forward business cases, CEO Trewartha queried whether the £25,000 income payment from the Motorola legal settlement could be used to offset the £31,000. CFO Knott confirmed that she would explore the viability of this.

The PCC expressed concerns regarding the future financial position of the Force and due to this was reluctant to agree to a carry forward to a new project unless previously agreed. The PCC stated that he would ask for any future requests to be brought post budget discussions at the November CGB.

DCC Sandall stated that in light of discussions around prevention previously had at the board meeting and the likely increase in demand and pressure on the Force in relation to the early prisoner releases, this business case would support the force in getting ahead of the curve and preventing this demand.

Discussions were held around Business case 3, which is operationally sensitive, there were questions regarding the capacity into existing operations and the PCC and DCC agreed to meet outside of CGB to discuss further including an in-depth briefing on the rolling programme and results achieved so far.

D) Budget Setting Process

CFO Knott presented the paper regarding updating the budget proposal timeline.

Mr Dawkins highlighted that the formal consultation and decisions should be made in January as set out in legislation, however the proposed timeline can be actioned.

The board agreed the updated approach including the report approaches and scenario planning.

- 09. Homicide Prevention Strategy (6) - agreed to send written correspondence on paper and attach to the minutes**
- 10. Paper on Recruitment and Retention (9) - agreed to send written correspondence on paper and attach to the minutes**
- 11. Operational Summary (5) - agreed to send written correspondence on paper and attach to the minutes**

Meeting closed 10:31

Date of next meeting: 18th September 2024