

**MINUTES OF THE PCC ACCOUNTABILITY MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 29TH JULY 2021 AT 10:30 A.M.
VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS (VIRTUAL MEETING)**

1. Attendance:

Mr G Orpen-Smellie Police and Crime Commissioner, OPCCN

Also in attendance:

Mr M Stokes	Chief Executive, OPCCN
Mr P Sanford	Temporary Chief Constable, Norfolk Constabulary
Mr N Davison	Assistant Chief Constable, Norfolk Constabulary
Mr E Bridger	Temporary Assistant Chief Constable, Norfolk Constabulary
Ms J Penn	Chief Finance Officer, OPCCN
Mr P Jasper	Assistant Chief Officer, Norfolk Constabulary
Mr M Cooke	Superintendent, Norfolk Constabulary
Ms N Atter	Corporate News Manager, Norfolk Constabulary
Ms S Lister	Director of Performance and Scrutiny, OPCCN
Mr J Stone	Performance and Scrutiny Manager, OPCCN
Ms H Johns	Communications Manager, OPCCN
Mr C Banks	Acting Inspector, Norfolk Constabulary
Mr J Mann	Performance and Scrutiny Assistant, OPCCN

Apologies for Absence:

Apologies received for:

Mr S Megicks	Temporary Deputy Chief Constable, Norfolk Constabulary
Dr G Thompson	Director of Policy, Commissioning and Communications, OPCCN

Before addressing the agenda items, the PCC advised of his statutory duty to hold the Chief Constable to account and added that his Police and Crime Plan would come into effect from the 31st March 2022. He went on to explain how the meeting has changed from the Police Accountability Forum to the PCC Accountability Meeting where the public can now submit questions to be asked by the PCC during the meeting. Any questions that were not addressed during the meeting would be published on our website with the Constabulary response.

2. Declarations of Personal and/or Prejudicial Interests:

There were none received.

3. To Confirm the Minutes of the Meeting Held on the 9th March 2021

The minutes were approved. There were no updates as there was no actions from the last meeting.

4. Constabulary Covid-19 Update

The Temporary Chief Constable (T/CC) spoke to the agenda item.

The key points discussed were as follows:

- The T/CC stated that the average number of daily cases of Covid-19 in Norfolk was 365 for every 100,000 people and advised that Norfolk was following the national trend. He added that a number of activations of call takers self-isolating had an impact on the Constabulary Control Room, although this was mitigated through contingency planning allowing the Constabulary to maintain the 999 and 101 service. During that time, 36 officers and 28 staff were isolating and/or had positive cases. The PCC stated that he was reassured the planning worked and the Constabulary was able to continue providing a service to the public.

5. Public Questions

First question relates to contacting local officers directly. Member of the public could not hand something into a police station, which was advertised as being open:

- The T/CC stated that due to Covid-19 infection control limits, police stations had limited the number of people allowed into the station. The ACC stated that across Norfolk there are three public enquiry sites that members of the public can hand things into: one in Great Yarmouth, one in Kings Lynn and one in Norwich. Volunteers are based at some other police stations; however, safety measures exist currently due to Covid-19. The ACC stated that local officers

could be contacted through email and by phone. He added that members of the public could also call the Constabulary on 101 and ask for an officer to call them back regarding an issue. Another way to contact the Constabulary would be to email the generic neighbourhood policing email address which can be found on the front of the Norfolk Constabulary website.

Two questions regarding the 101 number and how long it takes to answer:

- Since 2018 the Constabulary have changed the infrastructure of the Control Room and have enhanced the ability to answer 101 calls with a new switchboard system to manage them. There has been an increase to the number of switchboard operators from twelve to 27 and an uplift in the number of Communications Officers which has increased capacity; however, the Control Room is now taking double the amount of calls compared to five years ago. In June, 90% of calls were answered within two minutes and six seconds with an average of 45 seconds and calls to be dealt with by Communications Officers was four minutes and 44 seconds. There will always be some members of the public who will experience longer delays, especially during peak times and if they have administrative issues, as these will not take priority over issues such as Domestic Abuse. The triage system will select the urgency of calls and designate them to a queue where a switchboard operator will continually update the caller and provide them with alternative options to complete their request if they are not happy to wait.

Question regarding dog thefts and what the Constabulary is doing to make dog owners feel safe and how seriously is the issue being taken:

- The T/CC stated that over the past year there has been growing public concern in relation to dog thefts which is being fuelled by social media. He added that the prevalence is far lower than the perceived levels with 16 offences occurring in Norfolk over the past year. The Constabulary do take this seriously and are continuing to work with other partners to prevent this.

Question regarding national and local levels of financial fraud and the lack of Constabulary response to tackle this:

- The ACC stated that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services reported on this subject in 2018. Norfolk Constabulary is chairing a Fraud Delivery Group to ensure coordination in the response to this crime. There is currently a courier fraud occurring around Norfolk with criminals pretending to be police officers and requesting callers to withdraw money from their banks to be collected by a courier. Norfolk Constabulary is actively investigating this alongside educating the public on how to prevent this happening to them. The Constabulary is working with partners such as Action Fraud and are contacting victims of fraud to raise awareness and provide crime prevention advice. The best way is to protect ourselves using passphrases and some criminals are based overseas so it is harder to bring these to justice.

Two questions regarding e-scooters. One person is concerned about being knocked down on the pavement:

- The T/CC stated that the Constabulary are regularly stopping e-scooters. It is illegal to ride them on the pavement and the Constabulary has confiscated numerous e-scooters and posted advice on social media to try and help with this issue. The Constabulary is also working with local shops to provide leaflets

on how to use e-scooters when they are purchased. There is a pilot scheme in Norwich, but this is a new demand which Norfolk Constabulary are responding to.

Four questions on visible policing:

- Norfolk Constabulary has made the business decision to not have PCSOs due to the cost effectiveness and the greater powers of officers and the amount of flexibility that can be had with them compared to PCSOs. Officers can be deployed on call and based on demand. The T/CC stated that he wants to do his best to increase visibility of uniformed officers but there is a gap between expectation of the public and what the Constabulary can deliver. The T/CC stated that the Constabulary are doing more to communicate the work done by the Constabulary to members of the public. He added that the demand meant that it was not always feasible for officers to walk around the community; however, visibility will be promoted across the county where it can. Abstraction has been a challenge for the Constabulary and the Test and Trace app has made this more difficult recently. Everything ebbs and flows month to month and July has been a busy month for the Constabulary, but hoping that demand will settle in the next few months.

Four questions relating to roads policing:

- The T/CC stated that unmarked police cars would not be a visible presence, which explains the challenges of policing. The T/ACC said there is a finite level of resources from the Constabulary, but there was a great deal of work being done towards tackling the 'Fatal four'. The Constabulary are encouraging members of the public to send in dashcam footage and are working to increase the storage capacity the Constabulary can hold. The T/ACC stated it was a balance of prevention and enforcement that was needed, and the Constabulary would deploy smartly based on data and provide the greatest impact possible. The PCC asked how the Constabulary was promoting Operation Snap and if there were any social media campaigns. The T/ACC stated that an ongoing campaign is required and the Constabulary would continue to look into any dashcam footage they receive.

6. Police and Crime Plan Theme: 'Good Stewardship of Taxpayers' Money'

The Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) presented the report, which outlined the Constabulary's progress on the Strategic Objectives for Priority Seven of the Police and Crime Plan, the Estates Programme and the 2020/21 budget monitoring report.

The key points discussed were as follows:

- The ACO gave an overview of the Outturn Report for 2020/21. He outlined the final reserve movements and the in-year savings review over the past year. The group underspent by £685k on its revenue budget, equating to 0.39% of the total budget. He explained that due to the pandemic the Constabulary needed to protect reserves to absorb any funding uncertainty in line with a forthcoming

comprehensive spending review. He added that there was an underspend on the capital programme due to the pandemic causing slippage that moved estates spending to this year. The PCC asked the ACO to explain the constraints in the reserves. The ACO stated that the Reserves Strategy outlined the level of reserves and advised that levels do not fall below 2% of revenue budget spending. He added that the strategy was presented to the Police and Crime Panel who approved the precept. The ACO explained that the Constabulary no longer receive capital grants from the government and so reserves are projected to fall from around £20m to £14m.

- The ACO presented the estates paper and outlined the developments in Broadland and Swaffham Police Stations. He advised that Swaffham Police Station was now completed, but construction for the Broadland station was due to commence in early August. The Constabulary have identified sites that were no longer required for marketing and selling, which with sale receipts and reductions in running costs will ensure that the Long Term Estates Strategy reduces expenditure for the force.
- The ACC presented the performance metrics part of the paper and stated that 92% of emergencies were attended by police in less than 15 minutes for urban areas and 89% in 20 minutes for rural areas. He explained that during the pandemic this continued which was good service by Norfolk Constabulary. The ACC advised that the Constabulary answered 91% of 999 calls within ten seconds and typically answered calls within 5 seconds. The Switchboard in the Control Room were an ongoing investment that was discussed during the public questions part of the meeting. The ACC explained that because of the pandemic, the Crime Survey for England and Wales was not doing face-to-face surveying and instead Norfolk Constabulary have conducted their own surveys over the phone. This meant that the results could not be compared to previous years data; however, the Constabulary has conducted surveys with 4,000 people which produced positive results. 98% of respondents said they felt safe during the day and 78% said they did in the dark in Norfolk. 69% said they understand local policing issues.
- The PCC asked if there was an issue with drivers or transit when attending calls from rural areas. The ACC stated that it can be many issues but the Constabulary would aim to get an officer out as soon as possible based on availability. He added that there was a challenge due to the government uplift of new police officers which led to a number of officers needing to be driver trained. The Constabulary was working hard to release officers to provide a greater capacity for training. There are other priorities that need to be addressed to ensure the Constabulary are delivering the service required, but work is ongoing on solutions to deliver this.

7. Police and Crime Plan Theme: 'Support Victims and Reduce Vulnerability'

The Assistant Chief Constable presented the report, which outlined the Constabulary's progress on the Strategic Objectives for Priority Five of the Police and Crime Plan.

The key points discussed were as follows:

- The ACC stated that there has been changes made to the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime which the Constabulary are aiming to deliver against. There is a statutory duty to keep the code under review. One of the new areas introduced with the code is the flexibility for victim contact, which was introduced to reduce confusion. There are twelve key rights and in the future the police will have to produce a data return to the Home Office in regards to implementation of the code. The Constabulary supports a victim's group which meets bi-monthly and ensures the delivery of the code, monitors compliance and ensure any training is delivered. The ACC stated that early signs has been positive in meeting their responsibilities, but the next steps are to ensure victim personal statements are working well and needs assessments are robust and are getting to the victims that need them.
- The PCC queried how the Constabulary viewed the treatment of victims being passed through the criminal justice system. The T/CC stated that the Constabulary have a good working relationship with relevant partners; however, the delays found in courts has affected the work in the Constabulary. The backlogs have the potential to reschedule cases and this has the risk to lose victims from the system who do not want to wait. He added that an increased capacity at the courts would help alleviate the backlogs and other out of court disposals would assist the delivery of restorative justice.

8. Police and Crime Plan Theme: 'Deliver a Modern and Innovative Service'

The Temporary Assistant Chief Constable (T/ACC) presented the report, which outlined the Constabulary's progress on the Strategic Objectives for Priority Four of the Police and Crime Plan.

The key points discussed were as follows:

- The T/ACC explained the introduction of the Body Worn Video (BWV) project to provide devices for frontline staff. Work has been done to realise the benefits of the devices, with the potential to capture evidence and assist the Professional Standards elements. The key focus of the implementation of the devices is the initial evidence capture at scenes of crime which has led to positive outcomes. This data can be used to assist with court cases, but also complaints in regards to supporting or refuting allegations. The T/ACC stated that there are ongoing challenges with redacting and storing files along with sending data to external agencies. The Constabulary are looking to store files more efficiently and effectively with the upgrade of BWV devices. This has been successful, but challenges are ongoing. The PCC stated that there are ongoing issues in the media across the country with recordings being released early.

9. Professional Standards Department Complaints Update

- The T/CC stated that two significant things have happened in the last reporting period: one being the change of the Policing and Crime Act, which has broadened the criteria for a complaint. Also, the Constabulary have increased the access to make complaints which has increased the number of complaints being recorded. Through local engagement, the Constabulary have advertised how complaints can be made to the Constabulary and included the confidential way this can be done. Complaints have therefore increased by 28% and the rise in this has been mostly in regard to 'delivery of duties and services'. The T/CC stated that the increase in complaints can be put in context alongside the increased number of calls. He added that young officers will inevitably make mistakes and due to an increased number of young officers from the Uplift programme this would be more common, so the focus is to learn, apologise and improve.
- The T/CC advised that there were two complaints reduction initiatives being worked on by the Constabulary. One was to work supporting regular complainers to aim to resolve issues. The second is to publicise feedback internally so all officers can take learnings and improve the service given to the public. He added that responding to complaints in a timely fashion was imperative, but this was sometimes difficult due to increased demand. There has been an increase in Inspectors in local policing teams and there is a business case to increase the number of admin support to try and resolve the issue of timeliness. This is a good example of a legislative change nationally resulting in workload challenges locally.

10. Emergency Services Collaboration Group Update

- The T/CC stated that the Constabulary has sought to strengthen the partnership between themselves and the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service. This has led to positive developments such as the co-location inside the Constabulary Control Room which has helped with interoperable response to calls. The Constabulary will continue to explore where the Fire Service and Police can share premises, such as the Holt station. The T/CC explained that any further significant developments in regards to collaboration will need to be strategic/governance change, but the T/CC will await the PCC review in order to see the outcome. He added that the Constabulary is open to further engagement with other blue-light services should the opportunity arise. The PCC asked when had officers performed large incident training and if there were any plans to do exercises to keep these skills alive. The T/CC stated that over the past seven to eight years the Constabulary have tested responses through Operation Skilgate and there will be more training in the near future. He added that he was content with current processes and will continue to train officers in the future. The PCC added that he had met Councillor Margaret Dewsbury and Chief Fire Officer Stuart Ruff and all agreed to wait for decisions about fire governance before taking collaboration much further forward.

11. Emerging Operational / Organisational Risks

- The T/CC stated that the main areas of risk have been covered earlier in the meeting. The main issues outlined included the pandemic, where the Test and Trace app led to issues of resilience and he thanked his staff during this busy period. Another area was a number of current high-profile ongoing investigations, but he stated that this was being managed well.
- The T/CC advised that the Constabulary were planning for the comprehensive spending review and were working up contingencies depending on the outcome. The Constabulary continue to meet local targets for the national uplift of officers and are on track to deliver around 220 new officers. He added that the new framework for the new police education qualification will be live soon and abstractions would be a consideration for the Constabulary to manage. The PCC asked if there were any issues to having so many young officers in the Constabulary with less than five years of service. The T/CC agreed and stated that the new recruits start in response cars and are in front-facing roles. He added that there were positives with this as the new recruits would be motivated to do a good job and in five years' time Norfolk Constabulary would have an experienced and energised workforce. The T/CC stated that the Constabulary will need to increase the number of Sergeants to support the supervision of new recruits. The PCC added that he appreciated the work of the T/CC, officers and staff and was saddened they haven't received the pay rise to reflect these efforts.

12. AOB

- The PCC stated that the next PAM will be on the 20th October at 2pm and he would look to hold the next meeting physically and away from the Constabulary premises, but this would depend on Covid-19 restrictions and would be announced closer to the time.



.....
Giles Orpen-Smellie
Police and Crime Commissioner



.....
Paul Sanford
Temporary Chief Constable