



### 3. **To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

The minutes were approved. There were no updates for actions as there were no outstanding previous actions.

#### Discussion

- the PCC asked what impact Covid-19 had on the Constabulary. The Chief Constable stated that Norfolk Constabulary had prepared for flu pandemics; however, they had never envisaged that something like Covid-19 would happen across the world. The Constabulary had responded quickly to Covid-19 led by Temporary Assistant Chief Constable (T/ACC) Julie Wvendth. Most members of the public had been complimentary in the way that Norfolk Constabulary conducted its response, there had been good stakeholder engagement and good support from the local media
- the Chief Constable stated that sickness levels in the Constabulary were at record lows and the Constabulary had adapted and implemented flexible working for staff. During the lockdown period the rate of crime dropped significantly; however, levels have now almost returned to normal rates. The Chief Constable added that he was very aware that hidden crime types were ongoing and would be a major focus at this point in time. This included crime types such as violence against the person and domestic abuse
- the PCC asked how the Constabulary was addressing the Black Lives Matter movement and the protests that were happening in Norfolk. The Chief Constable said that the death of George Floyd has been a catalyst for change and has put in focus the societal and policing challenges alongside highlighting the disproportionality seen across the country. The Chief Constable stated the Constabulary did not have a great enough representation of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) population, and he had employed a member of staff to work to improve this. He stated that he was also looking into disproportionality of stop and search data and arrest data. There is a Joint Coercive Powers Board to independently scrutinise Norfolk Constabulary
- the Chief Constable clarified that attention still needs to be paid to stopping County Lines and this could not be forgotten. He added that there were representatives at the National Police Chiefs' Council where an action plan was created that included four headings: policing powers, community and police activity, minority groups working in the service and being representative of the community the police serve. The action plan is being led by chief officers and staff in the Constabulary. The PCC asked if the BAME Police Association would be useful to use to help inclusion in Norfolk Constabulary. The Chief Constable advised that Inspector Jason Selvarajah joined the Chief's Council meeting and had regular contact with the Ethnic Minority Police Association
- the PCC asked if Inspector Selvarajah could attend the Independent Advisory Group to represent the Constabulary and asked if there was unconscious bias that existed in Norfolk Constabulary. The Chief Constable agreed that this was a possibility and stated that some was conscious. He added that bias and discrimination needed to be called out and would not be tolerated in the

organisation. The PCC asked if there was training around discrimination for new recruits in the Constabulary and if there was any refresher training given to current officers. The Chief stated that he would have to speak to Chief Inspector Keith Philpot to check the training package delivered to new recruits, but he needed to understand what kind of training can be delivered, including refresher training. **ACTION: The PCC requested for an update on how the Constabulary plans to increase diversity in the organisation and the training provided to new and current officers.**

- the PCC asked the Chief to comment on Norfolk's crime statistics that were released by the Office of National Statistics and wanted to know if there were any areas for improvement or if there had been any areas of slippage. The Chief Constable stated that these statistics were released a few days ago and showed increases in some offences such as drug related crime and possession of knives. He stated this could show positive proactive action completed by the Constabulary and added that sexual offences also continued to rise in numbers due to the same reasons, and due to victims having increased confidence to report, plus a good service provided by the Constabulary. It was added that the crime types of stalking, harassment and violence without injury numbers were all up; however, the change in crime recording could be a factor for the increase
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspectors have said that Norfolk Constabulary needed to improve its crime recording, so this was being scrutinised more heavily by the Constabulary. The Chief Constable stated that although there had been increases in recorded crime, there had also been some decreases in areas such as homicides, robberies, theft of vehicles and a few other offence types. The PCC queried if Norfolk Constabulary was different, in terms of the increases and reductions, to other police forces across the country. The Chief Constable stated that this was not the case; however, Norfolk was one of the last forces to be inspected, and therefore would need time to catch up to other forces in terms of responding to recommendations for improvement. As part of responding to the recommendations, Norfolk Constabulary has recruited eleven officers who will oversee crime recording accuracy. This will help to ensure Norfolk Constabulary is compliant and as accurate as possible with recording crime
- the PCC queried if prevention is better than cure and if there was anything more that could be done to ensure vulnerable people are protected. The Chief Constable stated that the Constabulary is working with the OPCCN and other partners to review what more can be done to protect vulnerable people through the Community Safety Partnership and Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Board, so he was reluctant to add another layer of scrutiny if this was not required. The PCC stated that he would talk to the Chief Executive and Director of Policy and Commissioning and return to this later this year
- the PCC questioned if there was a backlog of cases in the Criminal Justice System and court and if this had an impact on the work being done by the Constabulary. The T/ACC stated that there were challenges relating to the support and assistance for victims and witnesses waiting for trial dates, but the Constabulary was aiming to have a better understanding of the situation. The

shutting of the courts during lockdown led to significant delays on trials, which had an impact on investigators who had contact with victims and witnesses during the processes. The PCC asked if they were up and running again to which the T/ACC stated that there were discussions ongoing with the Crown Prosecution Service to check backlogs and ensure processes are running smoothly. The PCC questioned if Video Enabled Justice (VEJ) was a welcome development. The T/ACC stated that it was and would be used; however, there were technical challenges, but it would allow the smooth transition into video remands

#### 4. **Police and Crime Plan Theme: ‘Good Stewardship of Taxpayers’ Money’**

The Assistant Chief Officer presented the report, which outlined the Constabulary’s progress on the Strategic Objectives for Priority seven of the Police and Crime Plan and the 2019/20 budget monitoring report.

The key points discussed were as follows:

- the Assistant Chief Officer outlined the budget monitoring report and stated that the forecast financial position of the Constabulary considered the current situation of lockdown and the other challenges highlighted previously. Overtime was being managed by the T/ACC, budgets had seen lower spending during lockdown due to less mileage being claimed and less use of pool cars. This was alongside the Blue Light two months of free fuel granted by the government to assist emergency services during Covid-19. The Assistant Chief Officer highlighted the increased spend due to PPE equipment, but added that this was offset by reductions in spend for stationary and printing. The Assistant Chief Officer stated that there was a forecast overspend by the end of the year for recruitment of additional officers, offset by staff budgets and a reduction in recruitment during lockdown. He added that a savings review had been conducted and would be shared with the PCC at the next PAF meeting. This included the capital programme which included the provisions for the centre of excellence purchased by the Constabulary at Hethersett Old Hall School
- the PCC queried how significant the loss of revenue from driver retraining scheme was during lockdown. The Assistant Chief Officer stated that this was highlighted in the report under section 2.9, but was a half a million pounds loss and Safety Camera Partnership meetings were in place to address this. The PCC questioned how much revenue the driver retraining scheme generated before Covid-19. The Assistant Chief Officer advised that he would need to find out for the PCC and inform him after the meeting although he reassured that there were still ongoing projects and that all funding was used for highway safety in some way. The PCC asked that if you paid a speeding fine would the money go back to the fund. The Assistant Chief Officer stated that it wouldn’t and it would go to central government. The Chief Constable stated that they were now running virtual speed awareness courses which would be offered for the same cost. There was a period where they were not offered, but they are now again. He added that there was two months of lost income from this and he would have to assess how this affects the Community Safety Partnership and revisit later in the year

- the PCC queried the cost of PPE equipment. The Assistant Chief Officer stated that it would cost three quarters of a million by the end of a year; however, the Constabulary would look to recover these costs from the government. The PCC questioned if the Chief would have to look at all areas to save money, including the capital programme. The Assistant Chief Officer agreed that everything would be looked into, including the capital programme where short life assets would be included in the considerations. The PCC asked if a potential second wave of infections alongside a second lockdown and precept would make it difficult to plan next year's budget. The Assistant Chief Officer stated that worst-case scenario plans are in place in the Medium-Term Financial Plan which included all the previous items. The Constabulary had considered this and is working up options through challenge panels in September where they will be submitting options to the Chief Constable
- the Chief Constable stated that there had been a clear directive from the Prime Minister that Operation Uplift was to remain and so the Constabulary would proceed to continue to recruit additional officers, and so would need to ensure space was provided in the police estate for them to work if needed. Positive messages continued to be circulated through all officers and staff in the Constabulary. The Chief Constable added that with the announcement of the pay rise of 2.5% it will be a difficult funding settlement to achieve, but reviews were ongoing and he wanted to reassure colleagues by ensuring that the Constabulary had the best environment to work in that it can have. The PCC stated that the policing model and the estate strategy should consider the public and should always have the community in mind when making decisions as it is partly paid by the taxpayer. The Chief Constable stated that Norfolk Constabulary has been rated by HMICFRS as one of the best in the country for effectiveness and efficiency during a decade of austerity and it continued to aim to be efficient and effective
- the Assistant Chief Officer stated that the Constabulary had been given additional grant funding and the Constabulary currently has a £1m underspend in the budget. This is due to the impact of the pandemic and the underspend has been added to the Constabulary reserves to mitigate any funding shocks. The PCC asked how much money the Constabulary had in its reserves. The Assistant Chief Officer stated that there was £4.5m in the general reserves to absorb any funding shocks and that this will be maintained due to Covid-19. He added that there was £2m in the invest to save reserve, in which the funding went to change programmes commissioned by the Constabulary, £5.5m in the capital reserve to assist with purchase of capital assets and the majority of which went towards funding short-life assets. The PCC queried if the Constabulary borrowed money to fund capital assets. The Assistant Chief Officer advised that there had been some historic interest loans alongside capital interest that the Constabulary would borrow money to pay. He added that the rates were below 3% interest and the finance strategy was proven to be value for money

## 5. **Constabulary Covid-19 Update**

The Chief Constable spoke to the agenda item.

The key points discussed were as follows:

- the PCC stated that this agenda item had mostly been covered through previous discussions at the start of this meeting and asked the Chief Constable if there was anything further he wanted to add. The Chief Constable commended T/ACC Julie Wvendth on her work as Silver Group Command and added that he was happy to move on to further agenda items.

## 6. **Emergency Services Collaboration Group Update**

- the Chief Constable stated that good work had been completed with the Ambulance Service as they have trained a large number of staff to drive ambulance vehicles. Some collaborative work with the Fire Service had been suspended during the lockdown period, but is now up and running again. He also added that there had been positive dialogue between Police and the Fire Service throughout the lockdown period and this continued. The PCC stated that the Chief Fire Officer team occupied Building 8 of the Norfolk police estate and fire staff occupied space in the Control Room in Building 1. He then asked if the Fire Service were paying towards the cost of occupying the buildings. The Chief Constable stated that there was a greater level of integration ongoing, such as some of the Police stations that are co-located with the Fire Service. He added that further work was taking place at Holt Police Station and the collaboration between Fire and Police was far more integrated
- the Chief Constable stated that the bigger benefits were yet to be realised in the collaboration partnership, the quality of service was good and he was comfortable with the current working arrangements. The PCC queried if there was a balance of benefits and asked what could be done to absorb any financial hits. The Chief Constable stated that he was reviewing the financial arrangements, but made the point that they were collaborated emergency services and a lot of work was ongoing to further progress collaboration between them, such as Hethersett Old Hall School

## 7. **Emerging Operational / Organisational Risks**

The Chief Constable outlined the emerging operational and organisational risks to the Constabulary, and gave updates on current processes.

- the Chief Constable discussed the Covid-19 crisis, stated that the Constabulary will have to be ready to respond to any further challenges faced and added that he was confident that processes were in place to be able to do so. He also stated that the country was heading into recovery phase, school holidays were approaching and he was expecting more Black Lives Matter rallies to occur.

The Chief Constable announced that crime statistics were a big challenge for Norfolk Constabulary and added that violence and hidden crimes would be the focus for the Constabulary over the coming weeks

8. **Date of Next Meeting:**

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2020 at 10:30am (venue TBC).



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Lorne Green  
Police and Crime Commissioner



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Simon Bailey  
Chief Constable