**Executive Board Minutes**

**Meeting Date:** 8th July 2021

**Duration:** 09:30am – 11:35am

**Location:** Microsoft Teams

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| **Attendees** | | |
| **Durham Police and Crime Commissioner’s Office** | **Durham Constabulary** | |
| **Chair:** Mrs Joy Allen (PCC) – Police and Crime Commissioner | Chief Constable (CC) Jo Farrell | |
| Mr Stephen White – Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer (CEO) | Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) Dave Orford | |
| Mr Charles Oakley (CO) Head of Governance & Finance | Mr Gary Ridley (ACO/CFO), Assistant Chief Officer & Joint Chief Finance Officer | |
| Mrs Jeanne Trotter (JT) - Head of Policy & Commissioning | Detective Superintendent Paul Gray (PG) | |
| Mrs Sweety Sahani (SS) – Head of Private Office | Detective Chief Inspector Lee Blakelock (LB) | |
| Mr James Atkinson (JA) – Scrutiny & Accountability Officer |  | |
| Mrs Jo’Anne Connor – Governance and Finance Manager (notetaker) |  | |
| **Guests** |  | |
| Mr Eddie Bell (Chair Joint Audit Committee) |  | |
| Miss Tracy Henderson (Internal Audit) |  | |
| **Apologies** | | |
|  | Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) John Ward | |
|  | Mrs Gillian Routledge (GR) Head of Tasking and Coordination | |
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| 1. **Welcome and Introductions** | | **Action Owner** |
| The PCC welcomed all members to the meeting. | | PCC |
| 1. **Minutes from the meetings held 10th June 2021** | |  |
| Minutes from the previous Executive Board meeting held on 10th June 2021 were accepted and recorded as true record. A copy of the minutes will be made available on the PCC website. | | JAC |
| 1. **PCC Action Log** | |  |
| CEO updated the Executive Board on the PCC Action log as below:  Reference 16: August Meeting update.  Reference 18: Out of Court Disposals (OoCD) - Two Tier Model - ACC Ward and DCI Davies updated on progress at last meeting. New legislation in relation to OoCD is expected Summer 2021. Action complete.  Reference 35 – Victims App is item 4 on this Agenda – added to the forward plan for quarterly updates – Action complete.  Reference 45 – An update on Complaints data is expected at the September Meeting.  Reference 49 – Draft Police and Crime Plan has been deferred to the August Meeting. | |  |
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| 1. **Victims App update** | |  |
| Detective Supt. Paul Gray gave an update on the Victims App.  Areas of discussion were around the platform to be used to deliver this service which is still ongoing.  Durham Constabulary is working with Portsmouth University and also researching a digital solution to develop a Victims App with Cumbria Constabulary. The finished product needs to be compatible with police systems to avoid duplication of information. Consultation has taken place with partner agencies and the Crown Prosecution Service on the development of an App. There is a gap in the market for a product like this which is still in the early stages of development.  PCC requested a demonstration of the App and suggested a focus group where potential users of the App could trial the product. Mr Gray hoped that the App would be a critical contact point for victims and a leaner two-way process between the force and/or partners and the victims. No specific timescales or costs are available at this stage.  PCC thanked Mr Gray for the update and looked forward to seeing the progress. | |  |
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| 1. **Thematic Report Domestic Abuse/Sexual Violence** | |  |
| Thematic Report Domestic Abuse/Sexual Violence delivered on behalf of Detective Chief Superintendent Dave Ashton by Detective Chief Inspector Lee Blakelock. Mr Blakelock shared details of the report which the Executive Board had sight of prior to the meeting.  *PCC asked if there are plans to understand the cohort of offenders who have been given a caution instead of a Checkpoint referral (in line with the new Out of Court Disposal (OOCD) policy)- this includes reoffending rate, harm scores?*  Work is ongoing around this cohort of offenders. Another two to three months need to elapse before the force can effectively identify any emerging trends. An update at a future meeting will be helpful.    *What plans has the Force got to ensure interventions for DA cases are dealt with through out of court disposals, especially when simple cautions will not be an option as part of the government’s new OOCD policy?*  Detective Chief Inspector Caroline Davies attends a custody and criminal governance group where cases are reviewed. The PCC was reassured by the statistics which showed 97% are appropriately dealt with through out of court disposals. Mrs Trotter will follow up the answer from DCI Davies to answer the question on out of court disposals.  *Is the force confident that dynamic more timely MARAC processes are delivering and effectively safeguarding victims / dealing with perpetrators?*  The force is confident, over the last financial year (2020/21), MARAC heard on average 63 cases per month with 17% of them being repeat cases. The MARAC process was reviewed and improved in Summer 2019, with twice weekly dynamic meetings introduced. This is working well and has been evaluated via an academic thesis by DCI Dutson which demonstrated a timelier response for victims and positive feedback from partners. The process continues to receive positive feedback in a Professionals’ Review Session was held on the 6th May 2021.  The work done by the force to capture the voice of children and their environments using Body Worn Video (BWV) through 2019 put the Constabulary in a good position during COVID lock downs. This was reinforced with messaging about positive action, coercion and control and evidence led prosecutions. These actions are subject to monthly reviews by Inspectors, including reviewing BWV which is fed into Force Threat and Risk meetings.  *Are there any future plans for MASH to service adults who have no children residing with them?*  When adults have no children residing with them, they are referred to the appropriate service for example Harbour or Innovation Officers.  *What benefit does the Force see from the DA Best Practice Framework? What are the feedback loops back into Force and across the CJ partnership? Are we confident participation and outcomes are meaningful?*  The Constabulary relayed that the DA Best Practice Framework provides a meaningful contribution. The Framework continues to review performance across the Criminal Justice system, working with the CPS, HMCTS and the PCC in the above regional forum.  *What specific actions are being taken i.e. the nature of training to aid the Control Room THRIVE accessing child vulnerability.*  All control room staff receive training in completing the THRIVE assessment and the focus around child vulnerability. Cases are then dip sampled and any issues are relayed back to the Inspector in the control room and individual staff members.  *While it is acknowledged Thematic Reports cannot capture every detail it would be useful for future reports on DA/ SV to cite the number of sexual offences that have passed through the OOCD route*.  Mr Blakelock highlighted some of the partnership work which took place around the management of those who commit sexual offences and suggested that should be captured in the next report.  To better understand the effectiveness of Durham’s response to domestic abuse in COVID, the Constabulary have been engaging in two academic studies, one with Northumbria University and one with the University of London and Durham University. Overall, the latter showed stable DA rates throughout the lockdown periods which is consistent with national figures.  Peer on peer abuse within educational establishments had been highlighted in March 2021 through the social media campaign '#everyonesinvited'. The latter was founded by Soma Sara as a movement to highlight the issue of rape culture amongst young men. The movement has been promoted through the online app Instagram and attracted 33,000 followers in the initial stages of its launch. It encourages individuals to share testimony about their experience.  A response plan (Operation Greenfinch) was set up by the Constabulary to ensure appropriate support and investigation was provided to any complainants or referrals from the national NSPCC helpline. Direct reporting has been very low in the Durham Constabulary area.  The identities of schools released to education colleagues, included 12 schools in the County Durham area (two of which have been closed for some time). On the 10th June 2021, Ofsted published a report and recommendations, Review of Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges, highlighting the prevalence of inappropriate sexual conduct and abuse.  The Constabulary is working with local education safeguarding leads (Ian Shanks (DCC) and Joanna Conway (DBC)) through the local Safeguarding Children’s Partnerships to support improving guidance, awareness raising and reporting mechanisms with the representatives from the Cohesion Unit, Partnerships and Safeguarding involved.  PCC and CC praised the valuable work of the Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVA) and Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVA) in supporting the victims and guiding them through the process. | |  |
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| 1. **PCC Accountability Report** | |  |
| Mr Atkinson presented the Accountability Report to the Board.  The areas raised within the report are based upon the four core outcomes and the key performance questions, as highlighted in the previous Police and Crime Plan. The PCC Caseworker tool showed from all cases recorded 44% were passed onto Durham Constabulary for resolution.  ‘Safety’ (proxy for ‘Fear of Crime’) has, despite being on a downward trajectory throughout 2021, jumped to its highest point as of May 2021. The relationship between OPCC and Force confidence findings is one which requires further analysis.  The External Strategic Scrutiny Governance Group (ESSGG) met on 15th June 2021. The OPCC is currently preparing to provide the ESSGG with a refined system to identify and monitor themes which should enable the Group to direct items over to the Force effectively.  The Crown Prosecution Service have relayed positive feedback on case file quality. Durham Constabulary have been identified as having very good file quality compared to other geographically close forces and the Durham rejection rate is low. This is positive feedback for the Witness Care Unit and the collective work around victim and witness engagement.  It was clarified that Rape is not a risk for Durham Constabulary who perform well in the national picture. It has remained on the internal PCC Risk Register pending presentation of the deep dive review expected at the next meeting.  PCC asked for sight of detailed actions, demand, and solutions in relation to the SNEN 101 service. This topic is always relayed from the public as a main area of concern and impacts on public confidence. – **Action 50 - An action plan to be shared with the PCC.** DCC said that there is an internal failure in this area with Police Officers and Staff reliant on Comms. Staff have been asked to give direct details like email addresses to divert from using the 101 facility with ongoing enquiries.  Durham Constabulary’s notification from Cleveland on the County Durham Specialist Operations Unit (CDSOU) partnership arrangement is set to have potential short, medium, and long-term impacts upon service delivery and capability. The ability of the Force to deliver on the associated Strategic Policing Requirements (SPR) will be an area of focus, work is ongoing to provide the OPCC with assurance on this matter. Confirmation that CEO Mr Stephen White will attend future SPR meetings.  Mr Atkinson concluded it had been extremely positive to see the OPCC and Durham Constabulary work together in a successful bid for the Safer Streets 2 funding. This will have a positive impact on their partners ability to assist in crime prevention by making communities safer for residents.  Project Soteria sees police professionals working alongside prominent academics to better understand a suspect’s behaviour and improve victim experiences within the Criminal Justice system.  Finally, the OPCC found it reassuring that while the Force have one of the highest charging rates for rape investigations in England and Wales, they are still committed to improvement.  Executive Board noted the content of the Accountability Report. | | DCC |
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| 1. **PCC Police and Crime Plan Draft** | |  |
| CEO Mr White apologised for not having the draft plan available for this meeting. The draft plan is due at the Police and Crime Panel meeting on 19th July 2021 and will be taken to the Executive Board on 12th August 2021.  Mr White will arrange for the Chief Constable to have sight of the draft as soon as possible.  The final version will be presented to the Police and Crime Panel on 17th September.  PCC added the plan has been the product of her whole team and she looks forward to getting the plan out there and delivering on it. | |  |
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| 1. **Joint Independent Audit Committee Annual Report 2020/21** | |  |
| PCC welcomed the Chair of the Joint Independent Audit Committee to the meeting, Mr Eddie Bell.  Mr Bell shared the final Joint Independent Annual Report 2020/21.  PCC agreed the Committee has acted independently, offering constructive challenge, and provided sufficient transparency which is invaluable to the public.  PCC on behalf of herself and the Chief Constable wanted to thank the Joint Independent Audit Committee for the work carried out during the year. | |  |
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| 1. **Quarterly Plan on a Page (Risk Register** | |  |
| Deferred to the next meeting and added to the Forward Plan - Complete | |  |
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| 1. **Draft Annual Governance Statements financial year ending 31st March 2021** | |  |
| Miss Henderson, Interim Audit Manager, shared the two statements one compiled for the Chief Constable and the other for the Police and Crime Commissioner.  The Chief Constable asked for an amendment to her statement – Mr Ridley had this in hand.  The Police and Crime Commissioner approved her statement.  These statements will be presented to the Joint Independent Audit Committee at their meeting on 20th July 2021. | |  |
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| 1. **Annual Internal Audit Report 2020/2021** | |  |
| The report showed the annual internal audit opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the governance, risk and control framework (the control environment).  A summary of the audit work carried out from which the opinion is derived. Details of the quality assurance arrangements in place during 2020/21 which incorporates the outcomes of the self-assessment completed by the Audit Manager in May 2021 to ensure conformance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS).  The Executive Board considered the Annual Internal Audit Report and the overall opinion provided on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Constabulary’s control environment for 2020/21.  The Executive Board noted the Annual Internal Audit Opinion and Report 2020/21 was considered and agreed by the Joint Independent Audit Committee at its meeting on 22nd June 2021.  Miss Henderson said that the moderate opinion is positive. CEO thanked Miss Henderson for that reassurance. | |  |
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| 1. **Income Generation** | |  |
| Executive Board will be aware that the Force advertises itself as being a provider of learning and development across operational policing areas. This has proven itself to be beneficial in terms of generating income which has been used to fund capital investment across the force in recent years.  Assistant Chief Officer Mr Ridley gave a brief overview of the Income Generation programme currently ongoing with in Durham Constabulary. There is good progress within the UK markets achieving income of £380,000.  Good progress within International Markets including working with Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kenya, South Africa, Caribbean, and Royal Canadian. This is regulated by the Commonwealth Office.  Training delivered on areas such as Forensics, Digital Leadership, Intelligence, Investigations, and Research.  The College of Policing have asked if the Force will support them in their delivery of their International Leadership Programme.  There is a 60-day contractual liability clause in case of a change in government. | |  |
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| 1. **Police Officer Uplift Report** | |  |
| Mr Ridley updated the Executive Board on the delivery of the Uplift Programme with the force which had been agreed in September 2019.  ACO shared progress made and the recruitment plan. The actual recruitment is higher than planned to allow for a degree of attrition. At present attrition rates are running at just over 9%, based on recruitment over the last four years.  Significant work has been undertaken by Durham Constabulary’s Learning and Development function in respect of introducing the Police Education Qualification framework (PEQF). The May 2021 intake was a Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship cohort, meaning that student officers undertake a three-year degree with Northumbria University.  The January 2021 intake was a Degree Holder Entry Programme cohort, a two-year part-time degree with Northumbria University, which is also part of the PEQF.  In addition to new recruits, the Force has also recruited several transferees during the year. It is expected that the Force will overachieve the uplift by approximately 20 police officers. This will eventually balance out with the retirement of current officers.  CC explained there had been a valuable recruitment of transferees with specialist skills.  Durham Constabulary is following national guidance in respect of diversity.  The Executive Board noted the content of the report and were assured Durham Constabulary were making excellent progress in the recruitment of Police Officers. | |  |
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| 1. **Any other business** | |  |
| No other business.  Date of next meeting is 12th August 2021. | |  |
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