

**NOTES OF THE SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 18 DECEMBER 2014 IN
CONFERENCE ROOM 8, CONSTABULARY HEADQUARTERS, WINSFORD.**

Present: Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner
J Dwyer, Police & Crime Commissioner
M Ollerenshaw, Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner
M Sellwood, Chief Executive
M Eaton, Governance Officer
E Allison, Research & Analysis

Cheshire Constabulary
S Byrne, Chief Constable
J McCormick, Deputy Chief Constable
R Muirhead, Director of Finance
Superintendent J Armstrong, Professional Standards
P Woods, Head of Planning and Performance

Matters considered in public

2014/67 NOTES & ACTIONS

The notes of the meeting held on 31 July 2014 were received; and the actions reviewed.

2014/68 POLICE & CRIME PLAN: PERFORMANCE

The Commissioner considered in detail a report on the performance for the year to date against the Police & Crime Plan 2013-16.

The Commissioner welcomed the continued positive reductions in recorded crime, anti-social behaviour incidents and business crime and the 4.4% increase in all crime solved. It was noted that the Minister of State for Policing had recently visited the Constabulary and was impressed by the work of the Dedicated Rape Unit. The Commissioner enquired about the level of people killed in road traffic collisions in the Northern Area; the reason for the reduction in domestic abuse incidents in the Western Area; and the number and category of hate crimes. The Commissioner also asked about the action being taken to improve satisfaction levels particularly in relation to anti-social behaviour.

In response to queries, the Commissioner was advised that a number of serious road traffic collisions had occurred recently on the M56 in the Northern Area; the number of domestic abuse incidents was lower as a result of changes to how vulnerable people were recorded on systems and the move from the VACA system which was phased in over a period of time starting with the Western Area and so there could be a delay in the impact across areas. Also in the Western Area, the impact of the new ways of working and preventative work undertaken within the 'All together better' programme is starting to see an impact – further evaluation of this was ongoing through the programme. The Deputy Chief Constable advised that hate crimes were mainly race related and that the Force Performance Board was requiring action by the Areas to improve satisfaction levels and further details would be provided at the next meeting.

ACTIONS:

That the Head of Performance & Planning brief the Commissioner on the number of incidents which occurred at 'Creamfields' 2014.

2014/69 PEOPLE STRATEGY: QUARTERLY REPORT

The Commissioner reviewed the performance exceptions against the measures included in the People Strategy. The report summarised the performance in relation to key measures and information on the corporate human resources function; the establishment figures; budget for police officers and staff; and a detailed assessment by rank/post and diversity factors.

The Deputy Chief Constable confirmed that the police officer establishment would be 1930 by 31 March 2015 following the recruitment of approximately 100 officers and that police staff were under establishment as vacancies were being held as part of the budget process to enable opportunities for redeployment of staff to reduce potential redundancies.

The Commissioner enquired about the action being taken to increase the number of female and BME candidates. The Deputy Chief Constable advised of the positive action which had been taken which included better use of social media and the press; liaison with Certificate in Knowledge of Policing providers to identify marketing strategies; further training for staff involved in recruitment in relation to unconscious bias; and a review of the sifting process to identify/acknowledge those candidates where English may not be a first language that may be detrimentally impacted by the current de-selection criteria that has a focus on grammar.

The Commissioner expressed his concern at the continued high levels of sickness absence and asked what measures had been put in place to reduce sickness levels as a result of the additional resources he had invested in this area. The Deputy Chief Constable reported that more robust measures had been introduced and procedures tightened which included the coding of categories of sickness; an increase in welfare support; ensuring regular contact with staff and officers absent; speeding up the selected medical practitioner process for long term sickness; a nurse employed to assist HR with reviewing officers on moderated duties; and a number of wellbeing initiatives such as the availability of flu jabs.

ACTION:

That the Head of Human Resources and the Head of Performance & Planning ensure that the most up to date establishment figures and budgeted officer and staff information, is submitted in future reports.

2014/70 COMPLAINTS: QUARTERLY REPORT

The Commissioner scrutinised the 2015/16 second quarter report on the number and types of public complaints; a summary against key performance measures; Area and HQ complaint allegations control charts and comparative complaint measures for 2013/14. It was noted that the timing of the data within the report has a lag due to the report timelines for submission to the Audit and Ethics Committee.

ACTION:

That the Head of Professional Standards and the Head of Performance & Planning review the performance information to ensure the most up to date, is submitted in future reports.

2014/71 SCRUTINY OF COMPLETED COMPLAINTS FILES

The Commissioner received a report on the complaints against police officers and police staff from across the Constabulary that had been reviewed by the Deputy Commissioner in the last quarter. The Deputy Commissioner had not identified any particular trends.

2014/72 CRIME DATA INTEGRITY ACTION PLAN

The Commissioner considered the Internal Auditor's crime recording review report and the Constabulary's Action Plan which addressed the areas for improvement outlined by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) following their inspection of Cheshire Constabulary in February 2014, the recommendations from HMIC's national report and the Internal Audit report.

The inspection had highlighted concerns in relation to under-recording of certain categories of crime; and decision making and the level of authority to 'No Crime offences', specifically in relation to a number of offences of rape. The Deputy Chief Constable reported that significant work had been undertaken and outlined the changes which had made to the Constabulary's procedures and processes. The Chief Constable advised he was confident that the issues identified by HMIC had been addressed and at the next inspection, performance would be seen as significantly improved.

The Commissioner welcomed that action had been taken and was satisfied that the issues raised by HMIC had been reviewed to ensure victim care and thorough investigations had taken place. Necessary controls had been put in place and a detailed action plan implemented. The Commissioner also welcomed the report from the Internal Auditor which provided significant assurance on the crime recording process and the adequacy of the action plan which had also been supported by the Audit & Ethics Committee.

2014/73 FRONT DESK AUDITS: UPDATE

The Commissioner considered an update on the actions taken in relation to the audits of police station Helpdesks and Police Contact Points undertaken during June and July 2014. The audits assessed the locations in relation to the external and internal environment; information available; the customer service level of Helpdesks; and the functionality of Police Contact Points.

The Deputy Chief Constable advised that significant investment had been made in improving public and disabled access to buildings and expressed appreciation to the Front Desk Auditors for the critical friend role they performed in assessing the Constabulary's public facilities.

Part 2 - Matters considered in private

That the following matters were considered in private as they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Sections of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 indicated below:-

<i>Item</i>	<i>Section</i>
<i>Health & Safety Strategy: Six monthly update</i>	<i>31 Law enforcement</i>
<i>Conduct Matters, IPCC Referrals, Grievances & Employment Tribunals</i>	<i>40 Personal Information</i>

2014/74 HEALTH & SAFETY: SIX MONTHLY UPDATE

The Commissioner considered an update in relation to the progress achieved against the strategic objectives outlined in the Health & Safety Strategy 2013-16. The Deputy Chief Constable reported there had been an increase in injuries associated with manual handling that was a result of the change in categorisation of incidents involving resisting arrest and that this was being reviewed to ensure officer safety training was addressing the issues.

2014/75 CONDUCT MATTERS, IPCC REFERRALS, GRIEVANCES & EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNALS

The Commissioner considered a report on the number of conduct matters, referrals to the IPCC and grievances and employment tribunals and noted that there were no particular emerging trends.

Duration of meeting: The meeting commenced at 9.30am and finished at 10.57am.