



ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD

**TUESDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2024 AT 9.30AM IN THE JORDAN SUITE,
THE EXCHANGE, COUNTY HALL, PRESTON**

PRESENT

Andrew Snowden - Police and Crime Commissioner
Chris Rowley - Chief Constable, Lancashire Constabulary

IN ATTENDANCE

Andrew Pratt - Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner

Sacha Hatchett - Deputy Chief Constable, Lancashire Constabulary
Sam Mackenzie - Acting Assistant Chief Constable, Lancashire Constabulary
Russ Procter - Acting Assistant Chief Constable, Lancashire Constabulary
Gillian Routledge - Chief Operating Officer, Lancashire Constabulary
Nikki Evans - Chief Superintendent, Lancashire Constabulary
Rachel Whittle - Head of Communication and Engagement, Office of Police and
Crime Commissioner
Ian Dickinson - Head of Governance and Accountability, Office of Police and Crime
Commissioner
Richard Harrison - Performance and Scrutiny Officer, Office of the Police and Crime
Commissioner

APOLOGIES

Karen Edwards - Acting Assistant Chief Constable, Lancashire Constabulary
Angela Harrison - Chief Executive Officer, Office of the Police and Crime
Commissioner

CURRENT AND SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The Chief Constable noted that performance outcomes were positive, with statistics for 2022/23 indicating a significant downward trend in the level of recorded crime. It was highlighted that there were differences in the crime statistics reported by the Constabulary compared to those reported nationally. The Commissioner was informed that work was underway to understand this as the national data set was based on the statistics reported by the Constabulary. Nevertheless, it was clarified that in both data sets there was a significant reported reduction in crime.

In response, the Commissioner highlighted that he was pleased to see the reductions in recorded crime numbers.



The Chief Constable noted that outcomes in Lancashire were some of the most positive nationally. In terms of arrival times to incidents and targets concerning the handling of 101/999 calls, it was reported that the Force was performing well and meeting targets. The Chief Constable highlighted that there remained an issue involving the interface between the switchboard and control room, however the Commissioner was assured that ACC Russ Procter was working to resolve this.

The Commissioner outlined the next steps in the recruitment process toward appointing a new Chief Constable following notification of the current Chief's intention to retire. It was explained that the assessment process was taking place week commencing 19th February 2024 to identify his preferred candidate for the role. It was confirmed that the Commissioner's preferred candidate would be required to attend a Confirmation Hearing on 4th March 2024 to enable the Police and Crime Panel to evaluate the suitability of the candidate for the role.

The Commissioner informed that following the Police and Crime Panel held on 31st January 2024, the proposed 4.75% increase to the council tax precept had received cross-party support and would come into effect from 1st April 2024 until 31st March 2025.

Clarification was sought regarding the formal initiation of the Purdah period. It was explained that the Host Authority for the Police and Crime Panel for Lancashire, Blackburn with Darwen Council, officially entered the Purdah period on Monday 25th March 2024, which therefore dictated the date the Commissioner and his Office aligned with by association.

COLLEGE OF POLICING INDEPENDENT REVIEW – RECOMMENDATIONS PROGRESS REPORT

The Commissioner introduced the item and placed emphasis on the fact that the Recommendations Progress Report tabled was specifically in relation to Lancashire Constabulary's recommendations received via the "Independent External Review of Lancashire Constabulary's operational response to reported missing person Nicola Bulley", published in autumn 2023.

The Commissioner invited the Chief Constable to provide an overview of the actions the Force had identified to address the Review's recommendations.

The Chief Constable noted that the Review's findings were received in November which catalysed an immediate assessment of the recommendations and finer details to identify points of learning towards developing the action plan, as presented in the report.

The Deputy Chief Constable noted that all aside from two actions had been completed in response to the overarching recommendations received from the Review.



In respect of the two actions outstanding, it was explained that the Constabulary were working with Merseyside Police to deliver the Continued Professional Development (CPD) event regarding media engagement, and that a date for this had been arranged during February 2024. In relation to the outstanding action involving the peer review, the Deputy Chief Constable confirmed that a Force had been identified to undertake this and dates for its commencement were currently being determined.

The Commissioner asked whether there may be a need for additional support from other Forces in the facilitation of the peer review.

The Deputy Chief Constable noted that upon assessment of the Terms of Reference, once established, there may be a need for involvement from other Forces and therefore potential cost implications may result in this eventuality.

In relation to the daily Pacesetter meeting, the Commissioner received assurance that there were robust processes in place to capture details of all GOLD groups and any other potential major and critical incidents.

Furthermore, an assurance was provided to the Commissioner that procedures had been put in place immediately following the incident to ensure that any critical incident identified by a policing division through a GRIP meeting would be escalated to the daily Pacesetter meeting.

The Commissioner noted that the report highlighted that the Constabulary's operation had been well-resourced and had gone 'above and beyond'. The Commissioner also acknowledged that a large proportion of the work to fulfill the completed actions had been initiated in the immediate aftermath of the incident and fully implemented. The Commissioner acknowledged that the majority of actions had been completed and recognised the key role of the Constabulary during and following the investigation in challenging circumstances.

The Commissioner wished to place on record his thanks for those members of the Constabulary involved in the search for Nicola Bulley.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next scheduled meeting was to be held on 11 March 2024.