



**MINUTES OF THE
POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S SCRUTINY MEETING**

MONDAY 19th JUNE 2023 at 13:00 – 16:00

LCR CHAMBER, MANN ISLAND, LIVERPOOL, L3 1BP

Attendees:

Emily Spurrell	Police and Crime Commissioner (Chair)
Jeanie Bell	Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner
Sue McTaggart MBE	Chief Executive, OPCC
John Riley	Chief Finance Officer, OPCC
Kim Dawson	Scrutiny and Improvement Officer, OPCC
John Weise	Independent Scrutiny Advisor – OPCC
Chris Shaw	Independent Scrutiny Advisor – OPCC
Serena Kennedy	Chief Constable, Merseyside Police
Chris Green	Assistant Chief Constable (Investigation and Intelligence), Merseyside Police
Keith Dickinson	Director of Resources, Merseyside Police
Paul White	T/Assistant Chief Constable (Matrix, Response and Resolution) Merseyside Police
Jenny Sims	Assistant Chief Constable (People Services), Merseyside Police
Mark Kameen	Head of Investigations, Merseyside Police
Amanda Ross	Analytics and Evaluation Manager, Merseyside Police
Matt Smith	Chief Superintendent Prevention
Zoe Thornton	Chief Superintendent Head of Local Policing

Apologies for Absence

Jon Roy – Assistant Chief Constable (Criminal Justice and Local Policing) Merseyside Police

Please Note:

- This meeting was recorded, and the discussion can be viewed here:
[Agenda for PCC Scrutiny Meeting on Monday, 19th June, 2023, 10.30 am | Liverpool City Region Combined Authority \(merseytravel.gov.uk\)](https://www.merseytravel.gov.uk/agenda-for-pcc-scrutiny-meeting-on-monday-19th-june-2023-10.30-am-liverpool-city-region-combined-authority)
- The slide pack referred to throughout this meeting can be viewed here:
[Scrutiny Meetings: Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner \(merseysidepcc.info\)](https://www.merseysidepcc.info/scrutiny-meetings-merseyside-police-and-crime-commissioner)
- Actions arising from the discussion during the meeting are highlighted in bold and provided in the action tracker document.



Item 1: Welcome and Introduction

The PCC welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced her new Independent Scrutiny Advisors, who will sit alongside the PCC at Scrutiny Meetings and be the voice of the public.

Item 2: Minutes of the last meeting and action tracker

The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

Two outstanding actions on the Action Tracker. The first Action to provide the PCC with an update as to the outcome of the additional checks on police officers and staff had been mandated by the Home Office following the case of former Met Officer, David Carrick. Merseyside have been provided with their data from PND and would be entering the review phase for the data. The Chief Constable provided an update that the process had taken place, however the sheer amount of information means that Merseyside would be able to share the data through the Scrutiny meeting in March 2024. This will remain on the action tracker until then.

T/ACC White provided the PCC with a verbal update regarding the work Merseyside Police are carrying out to deliver against the NPCC National Road Policing Strategy 2022/25. This action was discharged.

Item 3: New PCC Data Dashboard

The PCC was presented with the data dashboard, a standing agenda item that provides the PCC with Merseyside Police performance data on a quarterly basis. Discussion concentrates on exceptions and outliers.

The dashboard highlighted the percentage of 101 calls as answered within the Service Level Agreement, Recorded Homicides and Firearms Discharges as exceptions.

The PCC enquired as to the reasons why the percentage of 101 calls had seen a decrease when compared to the same period the previous year. T/ACC White explained that Merseyside Police have a self-imposed target of 60 seconds. The time to answer the 101 calls is on average 2 minutes 30 seconds. In the first two months of the new financial year, there has been an increase of nearly 2,500 calls into the call centre, which has an impact on the ability to answer all calls. There is a focus on improving performance on time to answer and also reducing the level of abandoned calls, as Merseyside police are finding that if people wait too long on 101 then they will put the phone down and call 999 instead, which also impacts on the time to answer.

T/ACC White expanded the discussion to explain that the call centre is looking to increase staffing levels due to vacancies and increased demand. Recruitment and training of new call handlers takes time. There are currently 5 new call handlers in training, aiming to put 16 new call handlers on a course in July 2023. There will be an enhanced advertising campaign in August 2023 for new intakes of call handlers in November and February 2023. The force explained that they recognise some of the challenges and are doing everything to address them.

The dashboard showed an end of year 2.24% increase in total recorded crime, when compared to the previous years. There are increases in recorded incidents of domestic abuse, other sexual offences and harassment, which are driving this increase. Merseyside are in line with the performance of our most similar forces for these crime types.



Homicide and Firearms discharges have been highlighted as an outlier within the dashboard. When compared to Most Similar Forces Merseyside are comparable to the average for those forces yet are above the national average for these crime types. Merseyside has had several high-profile homicides and firearms discharges over the course of this financial year, the response to which have been discussed in detail in the December 2023 Scrutiny meeting.

Item 4: Emerging Issues: A Discussion

The PCC congratulated Merseyside Police on successfully delivering around the recent Eurovision event and enquired around an indication of the costs associated with the event. T/ACC White gave an overview of the positive outcomes of the event, including the recording of only 40 additional crimes and no significant crime and disorder issues. Policing the event cost £3 million in total, with £2 million directly recoverable through special Home Office grant with the balance being opportunity cost.

The PCC enquired regarding the observations made withing the recently released HMIC State of Policing Report written by HMI Andy Cooke and asked if the chief officer team could reflect on how Merseyside Police is continuing to build trust and confidence in policing. The Chief Constable responded that Merseyside Police continues to invest in the prevention agenda and continues to build on the vast amount of community engagement work. There has been the creation of additional neighbourhood policing teams as a result of Operation Uplift. The force strategy has been reshaped and focuses on the clear, hold, build strategy and inclusion.

The DPCC acknowledged that Merseyside Police have had a difficult few months around ensuring the safety and security of asylum seeks across Merseyside. The DPCC extended thanks to officers for ensuring their safety and enhancing community cohesion and enquired as to the work that was currently underway to continue to ensure the safety of asylum seekers and further enhance community cohesion. Ch/Supt Thornton explained that the police work within already well established partnerships were there is currently and continuing to be much activity that takes place to address the challenges.

Item 5: Preventative Policing Update

Ch Supt Smith provided the PCC with an update around the implementation and the first year of work carried out by the new Prevention Strand. Working in a preventative way allows Merseyside Police to better understand crime, how it affects our communities and ultimately prevent crime from happening in the first place. This is delivered by working together and in partnership with local stakeholders towards a common aim. Merseyside Police's prevention strategy mirrors the national Prevention Strategy. The strategy is underpinned by 4 pillars, which are: cultural change, reducing harm, reducing offending and reducing the demand though an evidence-based problem-solving approach. Details of the prevention approach is provided within the slide pack and can be found here: [Scrutiny Meetings: Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner \(merseysidepcc.info\)](https://www.merseysidepcc.info/scrutiny-meetings)

Item 6: Stop and Search

The PCC opened the discussion by highlighting the announcement that morning, by the Home Secretary, that Police Forces are encouraged to enhance their use of Stop and Search. In addition, Merseyside Police carry out the largest number of stop and searches on a monthly basis, of all forces nationally. The data shows that the number of Stop and Searches carried out fluctuate in line with force operations and events. On average



Merseyside Police carry out just over 4000 stop searches a month. These can be publicly compared on the Police.uk website.

The PCC enquired as to the outcomes of Stop and Search, the average for the year shows that around 19% result in a positive outcome. In comparison to most similar forces Merseyside is slightly lower than other forces for positive outcomes. Outcomes that result in No Further Action account for about 80% of the local outcomes.

The PCC enquired regarding youth stop and search and was provided with information breaking down youth stop and searches by month and age of young person. In comparison to our most similar forces for youth stop and search Merseyside is fourth out of seven. PCC Independent Scrutiny Advisor John Weise asked the force to explain in what circumstances they would use stop and search. Ch Supt Smith explained that there are many circumstances in which Stop and Search would be used, necessary grounds for stop and search is required and there is a robust national process in place that officers must adhere to when conducting stop and searches.

The DPCC enquired if Merseyside Police had made use of the new Serious Violence Reduction Orders and what impact they would have on the stop and search figures? It was explained that these are a relatively new order, for which Merseyside Police is a pilot force area. The orders are for individuals who are suspected and then convicted of serious violence or possession of a weapon. The force, at the time of the meeting, have issued 2 orders, which give grounds to search those individuals who have been granted orders against them.

The PCC questioned as to what internal governance mechanisms the force had in place to ensure robust oversight of the stop and search process? Ch Supt Smith explained that there is an internal Public Encounters Group which oversee all aspects of stop and search, in addition there is also a six weekly public scrutiny panel. Data from these meetings is fed back into training and to individual officers.

The PCC enquired as to the circumstances in which you would stop and search a young person and how do Merseyside compare nationally in terms of the number of children and young people that are stopped and searched in the region? The force responded that the circumstances for searching a young person are very similar to that of searching an adult. Merseyside are middle of the table when compared to our most similar forces for the number of stop and searches carried out on a young person. Officers are alive to the fact that stop and search can be a traumatic event for a young person and will ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place, both during and after the search process. DCC Green emphasized that the use of stop and search is important in terms of being a preventative element in the ongoing work across Merseyside to prevent the use of firearms and serious and organised crime.

The PCC was presented with ethnicity data regarding stop and search, which shows the Merseyside average of the likelihood of being stopped and searched depending on a person's ethnicity. In comparison to most similar forces, Merseyside have the lowest disproportionality of the forces. A detailed breakdown of each ethnicity is presented within the slide pack. The Public Encounters Group looks at all the ethnicity data in detail and will look particularly at self-defined ethnicity, how this is recorded and the outcomes. The group will also try to understand why there may be differences across different ethnicities. Ethnicity data is



compared to the latest household census data, which ensures that it is as accurate as it possibly can be.

Item 7: Use of Force

The PCC was provided with information regarding Use of Force by officers. Over the year there has been an increasing trend in the in Use of Force, which is in relation to the increase in various crime types and use of force as a tactic. The PCC clarified what would be considered use of force. Ch Supt Smith explained that it is a full spectrum of methods used to further de-escalate a situation, which can range anywhere from having a conversation to using personal protective equipment to drawing a taser or firearm. The public encounters group continues to be the oversight body for the use of force, in the same way it oversees stop and search. The information provided shows that there is some disproportionality when it comes to use of force against offenders. Merseyside are aware of this issue, some of it being data quality, and a working through the public encounters group to ensure that disproportionality is reduced.

The DPCC enquired as to what would happen if someone presented with acute behavioral disorders and how officers would differentiate between these disorders and mental health episodes? The force responded that officers receive personal safety training every twelve months, which has a specific element around identifying issues. They are confident that the training the officers receive enables them to have a good knowledge of any issues that may present in order to manage the health and wellbeing of the individual. Information around the number of both offenders and officers who are injured due to use of force was presented. There are very small numbers of offenders who are injured because of having force used against them.

The DPCC enquired as to what the oversight process for people who have been seriously injured after being subject to use of force. The case will be investigated thoroughly by the Professional Standards Department and assessed to see if it meets the threshold for IOPC investigation. Claims for injury can be made by offenders and there is a cost implication to the force. The PCC enquired as to the process for officers who have been assaulted. Merseyside Police assured the PCC that there is a really comprehensive approach to officer assaults, which are taken very seriously in Merseyside.

Item 8: Mental Health

The PCC was provided with information regarding the number of Section 136's that Merseyside had carried out in the last year. A section 136 under the Mental Health Act is a power used by police officers to detain people in the community for a formal assessment by a qualified mental health practitioner. The information provided shows that due to the approach that Merseyside Police use, which includes the use of the Mental Health Triage cars, there have been 540 Section 136's prevented. The PCC enquired if Merseyside Police knew what percentage of incidents have mental health as a contributing factor? T/ACC White acknowledged that from the one day snapshot analysis conducted, around 14% of all contacts in Merseyside, during a 24 hour period had mental health as a contributing factor.

Information regarding the detentions from police custody shows that there has been an increase in the number of people who are taken to a place of safety rather than a custody suite. The PCC enquired as to why that might be the case. Ch Supt Thornton responded that there is a



high level of assessment in custody, which includes an assessment by a mental health nurse. The level has also increased as there are limited numbers of places of safety provided by local authorities and a general lack of availability of beds.

The PCC asked around the average length of time the police officer remains with a patient prior to handover to health staff. The force responded that they have seen a significant drop in the waiting times since the implementation of the Prometheus project. This will continue as the force looks at way of implementing the incoming Right Care Right Person initiative that was successfully trialed in Humberside Police. T/ACC gave a detailed account of the work of the mental health triage cars and the benefits using them. The DPCC enquired as to the partnership working that was necessary to ensure this service is delivered correctly, and if those relationships were in place. T/ACC White assured the DPCC that those partnerships were in place and working well daily.

The PCC asked if there is sufficient mental health training for staff and officers. The force detailed the bespoke training given to staff, officers and PCSOs and confirmed that Merseyside Police ensure that any training around mental health is up to date and current.

Item 9: Anti-Social Behaviour

The information shows that, over the last two years, the recorded incidents of Antisocial Behavior have reduced. The reduction in the year 2022/23 is due to a change in recording standards, where forces are now required to record certain Anti-Social Behavior incidents as public order. The PCC made mention that the reduction in ASB statistics did not correspond with the general feeling and narrative the public are feeding back to the PCC. The PCC also raised the issue that many members of the public say there is no point in reporting ASB and enquired as to the work that was being undertaken to address the issue of ASB.

Ch Supt Thornton gave an overview of the of some of the initiatives that the police carry out to increase public reporting including most recently the Neighbourhood Week of action, in July the ASB awareness week takes place, for which Merseyside Police have a planned week of action. Merseyside police also work in partnership with local authority community safety partnerships, the fire service and other local stakeholders. The ASB partnerships will start the planning stages for Operation Banger over the coming weeks, in order to prepare for the Halloween and Bonfire period. In addition the police have hotspots of ASB that are identified and develop a joint problem solving approach to with partners. This work goes on throughout the year, as hotspots move so do the approaches to problem solving and includes neighbour disputes.

The PCC specifically enquired about the approach to tackling ASB during the Summer. The force responded that each year for the summer period they develop bespoke plans for each of the geographical areas that overlap with the High Harm, High Crime areas, which have attracted additional government funding, a detailed description of the operational deployment of officers and staff was discussed. Daily business within the Local Policing areas includes identifying hotspots of ASB, those who perpetrate it, along with any high demand generators. The force also looks to see if there are any vulnerable victims such as domestic abuse victims and if there are any links there.



Item 10: Finance

The Director of Resources presented the end of year financial position to the PCC. He outlined that the force finished the financial year in a strong position with a £5.8 million underspend. This underspend is due to the prudent and cautious approach that was taken in terms of allocating funds to Operation Uplift. These funds are now being allocated. There is now an additional £1.7 million of income through the proceeds of crime, which will be allocated to reserves for future use with invest to save.

The Capital budget shows an underspend, which is due to some delays within the delivery of the estate's strategy. There also remains an underspend with vehicle procurement. It is worth noting that there are continued delays in vehicle supply, which the police and the national procurement agency are working to resolve.

PCC Independent Scrutiny Advisor John Weise enquired as to what the saving requirement for Merseyside Police was over the next few years and how the force intend to meet these savings requirements? The Director of Resources explained that over the medium term financial strategy (MTFS) there is a further £15.3 million to save. There is now a dedicated team in place to identify these savings and the MTFS is designed in a way that the larger savings needed are realized in year 4 and 5.

Item 11: Public Questions

What is Merseyside Policing doing to strengthen and support the Matrix Unit and armed officers, in order to disrupt gangs and organised crime groups on Merseyside?

The Matrix is a mixed use unit that comprises of Disruption Teams, Armed Policing, Dogs and Mounted Teams, Drone Unit and Roads Policing Unit. All these teams work closely together to disrupt gangs and tackle serious and organised crime. In terms of the question, the recent force restructure review will

Increase the number of officers in roads policing and in disruption, which will give the force more resilience and proactive capability in relation to targeting OCG's and Serious and Organised crime. The force priority crime team, who were previously responsible for targeting named offenders and other priority crime issues, have now been moved from local policing into Matrix, so there's better governance on the targeting of gang and OCG offenders. They can't do that without the right information and intelligence to support, that information, support and intervention comes from the North West Regional Organised Crime Unit (NWROCU) and Merseyside Police Force Intelligence Bureau to ensure the right people receive the challenge to get the greatest impact on OCG activity, disruption and targeting. We also ensure that the teams get the right education training around latest techniques to address, disrupt and also identify vulnerability. We've invested in some equipment and the technology so the teams have got the right capability and equipment to keep pace with criminal advancement in the crime.

Now that IPLDP has returned, will those officers on PCDA be given the opportunity to change to IPLDP? If officers who aren't academic unfortunately do not pass their degree, will they be allowed to revert to IPLDP to remain in the Force in order to ensure the number of officers on our street remain as it is?

The programme that we are talking about is the Initial Police Learning and Development Programme, which in its old format has gone. We are implementing the new version of the IPLDP alongside the degree programme and we have two intakes in July and August 2023. It is important to note that the content of that has changed and it does incorporate elements



of our police constable degree apprenticeship. There will be a fourth non degree route implemented as of April 2024, for which we are awaiting guidance from the College of Policing as to what that will look like.

In terms of Merseyside and the academic routes we have people, unlike other forces in the country, who go on our police constable degree apprenticeship at level 2, GCSE level and we put a huge amount of support into those people who may struggle academically both at the training academy and with the John Moores University. What we are finding is those people who come on at level 2 because of the support that they get are going on to get excellent degrees and also are operationally credible, good police officers are out there in the force. We put support in place for anybody who's struggling as they are identified early on and a package of support is put in place to support them.

Item 12: Any Other Business

None Notified

Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 14th September 2023 in LCR Chamber, Mann Island, Liverpool, L3 1BP 10:00 until 13:00 covering the topics of Workforce, Race Action Plan and Neurodiversity