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## **Policing Partnership Board for Wales**

### **Virtual meeting**

**Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022**

### **Minutes**

#### **Attendees**

Jane Hutt MS	Minister for Social Justice (Chair)
Dafydd Llywelyn	Police and Crime Commissioner, Dyfed Powys (Co-chair)
Mick Antoniw MS	Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution
David TC Davies MP	Parliamentary Under Secretary of State and Assistant Government Whip
Lynne Neagle MS	Deputy Minister, Mental Health and Wellbeing
Julie James MS	Minister for Climate Change
Richard Lewis	Chief Constable, Dyfed Powys
Pam Kelly	Chief Constable, Gwent Police
Jeremy Vaughan	Chief Constable, South Wales Police
Richard Debicki	Deputy Chief Constable, North Wales Police
David Thorne	Assistant Chief Constable, South Wales Police
Jeff Cuthbert	Police and Crime Commissioner, Gwent
Andy Dunbobbin	Police and Crime Commissioner, North Wales
Alun Michael	Police and Crime Commissioner, South Wales
Eleri Thomas	Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, Gwent
Emma Wools	Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, South Wales
Reg Kilpatrick	Director General Covid Response, Welsh Government
Jon Drake	Director, Violence Prevention Unit
Karin Phillips	Deputy Director, Community Safety Division, Welsh Government
Michael Curties	Head of Substance Misuse, Welsh Government
Christopher Gittins	Head of Substance Misuse & Offender Health Policy, Welsh Government
Jayne Phillips	Crime & Justice Team, Welsh Government
Sarah Rhodes	Head of Homelessness Prevention, Welsh Government
Carl Spiller	Senior Homelessness Prevention Officer
Chris Jennings	Executive Director Wales, HM Prison and Probation Service
Joanne Hopkins	Public Health Wales
Christopher Batchelor	Deputy Director, Home Office
Nicola Davies	Regional Director for Wales Probation
Sarah Capstick	Safer Communities Network WLGA
Naomi Alleyne	Director of Social Services and Housing, WLGA
Chris Llewelyn	Chief Executive, WLGA
Carys Morgans	Chief Executive, Dyfed Powys PCC
Sian Curley	Chief Executive, Gwent PCC
Lee Jones	Chief Executive, South Wales PCC
Stephen Hughes	Chief Executive, North Wales PCC
Angharad Metcalfe	Strategic Lead for Commissioning, Substance Misuse and Mental Health, South Wales PCC
Paul Morris	Head of Police Liaison Unit
Alun Davies	T/ Chief Inspector, Police Liaison Unit
Joanna Huddleston	Administrator, Police Liaison Unit
Sahil Afware	Senior Private Secretary, Office of the Secretary of State for Wales
Ben Bryant	Combatting Drug Misuse Programme, Home Office

#### **Apologies**

Simon Hart MP	Secretary of State for Wales
Carl Foulkes	Chief Constable, North Wales Police
Amy Rees	Director General of Probation in Wales
Asim Hafeez	Deputy Director International & Domestic Engagement & Strategy Directorate Home Office



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Emma Thomas  
James Searle  
Leanne Lewis  
Tracy Cooper

Head of Community Safety Network  
Head of Crime & Justice Team, Welsh Government  
Crime & Justice Team, Welsh Government  
Public Health Wales

## Actions arising from the meeting

Homelessness Team in Welsh Government are seeking views from Policing in Wales regarding the use of Letters of Comfort to landlords in relation to substance misuse
Lynne Neagle MS suggested discussing options in relation to Out of Court Disposals collectively by involving HMPPS and Police.
PCC Jeff Cuthbert and Minister for Social Justice, Jane Hutt to pick up homelessness at their regular meetings
CC Jeremy Vaughan to take the emergency services covenant to Joint Emergency Services Group and will feedback to Policing Partnership Board for Wales

### 1. Welcome and Chair's Address

Jane Hutt Minister for Social Justice opened the meeting and welcomed members to the Policing Partnership Board for Wales. Jane Hutt MS welcomed ministerial members from both Welsh Government and UK Government, introducing Mick Antoniw Counsel General and Lynne Neagle, Deputy Minister, Mental Health and Wellbeing as well as David TC Davies MP representing the Secretary of State for Wales. She also mentioned that Julie James MS, Minister for Climate Change is joining shortly. Jane Hutt MS also highlighted that it is PCC Llywelyn's last Policing Partnership Board for Wales as lead Police and Crime Commissioner as this will hand over to PCC Cuthbert from 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022 and thanked him for his support and work over the last few months. Jane Hutt MS mentioned that CC Foulkes is retiring in September 2022 and extended her best wishes and thanked him for his tremendous service, particularly as lead Chief Constable on many occasions, as he isn't present today she advised that she has written to him. Jane Hutt MS also congratulated CC Kelly as she was awarded the Queens Police Medal. She also noted that it is CC Lewis' first Policing Partnership Board for Wales as Chief Constable of Dyfed Powys Police.

### 2. Comments from David TC Davies MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State and Assistant Government Whip

David Davies MP thanked Jane Hutt MS for the welcome and mentioned that although it is his first attendance at Policing Partnership Board for Wales, he did work closely with Welsh forces during the Covid-19 pandemic. David Davies MP echoed Jane Hutt MS's sentiments and stated that he has had a lot of dealings with CC Kelly so wanted to highlight that the medal was well deserved. He also extended his thanks to PCC Llywelyn.

David Davies MP apologised that Simon Hart MP could not attend but stated he is glad to be able to attend on his behalf. He explained that he discovered through the



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Covid-19 pandemic that there are reserved areas such as Policing and non-reserved areas such as Health but it remains important that the responsibilities in these areas work together on these issues. David Davies MP highlighted that there are a lot of police issues that are going to overlap into policy areas which are decided upon by the Welsh Senedd.

David Davies MP thanked the board for the opportunity to attend and invited questions as he is keen to assist.

## 2.1. Comments from Mick Antoniw MS, Counsel General & Minister for the Constitution

Mick Antoniw MS thanked the board for the opportunity to attend and explained that it is his intention to attend as many Policing Partnership Board for Wales meetings as possible and engage in the work as he recognises there is a significant overlap with his role. Mick Antoniw MS discussed further that the Welsh Government have recently published a Delivering Justice for Wales paper which sets out a number of aspects with regard to justice and extended his gratitude towards all that contributed towards the creation of the paper. Mick Antoniw MS stated that he feels it isn't important who controls the delivery of justice but rather how justice is delivered better. He explained the most important factors are:

- What is being carried out collaboratively already, as there is an enormous amount of work happening already such as work with the Police and Crime Commissioners alongside other services. Mick Antoniw MS expressed his gratitude towards Jane Hutt MS for the work that she does in this area.
- What other work can be carried out such as how we can deliver those areas better as well as other areas.
- Looking at the Justice System and Devolution of Justice as well as the Thomas Commission recommendations. Mick Antoniw MS stated that he feels Devolution of Justice is almost inevitable due to the way in which Housing, Education and Youth and Social Services need to collaborate and engage with Justice and explained that he hopes some of the Board will be able to participate in developing the paper in due course.

Mick Antoniw MS gave his thanks to the Police and Crime Commissioners for the work they have done on the Justice Paper and stated he looks forward to further engagement on that.

**2.2.** PCC Michael felt that it was positive that the Police and Crime Commissioners were involved and trusted in advance of the publication of the Delivery of Justice Plan. He also praised the positive approach that the Welsh Government are taking towards Devolution and feels this gives real strength and makes it feel as though Devolution of Justice and Policing is inevitable in the long-term.

PCC Michael stated that in regards to policing as it isn't devolved, Chief Constables



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have a level of operational independence, similarly to Police and Crime Commissioners as elected representatives, they also have a degree of autonomy where some colleagues in other Criminal Justice bodies don't have this independence.

### 3.

**2.3.** David Davies MP responded to PCC Michael's comments by advising that it isn't the intention of the UK Government to devolve Justice to Wales.

**2.4.** Jane Hutt MS added that based on the above comments, she emphasised how important the Delivering Justice for Wales document is as it highlights important collaborative work such as Criminal Justice Blueprints and Welsh Government funding PCSOs.

## 3. Key Issues for Discussion

### 3.1. Homelessness

Jane Hutt MS introduced the topic by explaining that this presentation will consist of three slides which will be presented by Naomi Alleyne from WLGA, Carl Spiller from Welsh Government and CC Vaughan from South Wales Police.

**3.1.1.** Naomi Alleyne from Welsh Local Government Association explained that the slide was put together collectively to set out some emerging challenges and considerations that the WLGA have for the Policing Partnership Board for Wales' consideration from a different perspective but is complimentary within that. She explained that the provision of temporary accommodation changed dramatically during the pandemic, based on the public health emergency and the priority to stop the spread of infection, with changes to statutory guidance to ensure nobody was sleeping rough. Naomi highlighted that Local Authorities were fully supportive of this approach and will continue to support the approach. She explained that there will be further legislative change during this term from Welsh Government to reform homelessness legislation.

However, Naomi stated that this resulted in 7779 individuals in emergency temporary accommodation across Wales at the end of March 2022. She added that since the start of the pandemic over 20,900 people who were previously homeless have been supported through emergency temporary accommodation. However, there is also a consistent trend of increasing numbers of people accessing emergency temporary accommodation and it is anticipated that the cost of living crisis will also have an impact on the number of people requiring emergency temporary accommodation as a result of not being able to pay rent/mortgages.

Additionally, Naomi discussed the issue that there is an increasing gap between Local Housing Allowance which is set for the average cost of rent and what rent levels are across the private rented sector. She explained that the WLGA have written to the UK Government asking for more flexibility around the increase of the Local Housing Allowance as that will ensure more properties are affordable for people at a local level.



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There have also been some concerns raised regarding Anti-Social Behaviour at temporary accommodation locations through the pandemic and discussions have taken place at a local level. For those that were placed in temporary accommodation, it did mean that some support services were able to reach people to encourage and support them to access services to help to address issues that potentially lead to their homelessness, for example substance misuse. Therefore, Naomi is keen to ensure that people are providing appropriate support to people in the right place.

Naomi also raised concerns regarding the challenge of providing 20,000 more homes available for social rent which is a Programme for Government commitment. Local Authorities support this as there is an urgent need for more housing across Wales, but there are challenges with this due to development delays (both skills and materials), the cost of living crisis and the requirement to develop zero carbon houses.

She also explained that there are concerns about the impact that second homes have on the housing market as well as the rapidly increasing house prices. In addition to refugee schemes which puts pressure on existing housing projects. Therefore, Naomi feels it is vital for agencies to work together to identify needs moving forward.

**3.1.2.** Carl Spiller from Homelessness Prevention Policy within Welsh Government reinforced the points Naomi raised, particularly around the challenges agencies are currently facing. Carl gave his thanks to the Local Authorities for their work during the pandemic in supporting 20,000 since the start of the pandemic, which is a remarkable achievement but highlighted that nearly 8,000 people are still in temporary accommodation due to issues in finding long-term permanent homes for them, many since the start of the pandemic.

Carl mentioned that pre-pandemic it was the Welsh Government's ambition to transform Homelessness Services in Wales to ensure that homelessness is rare, brief and unrepeatable. In effect, enhance prevention services, deliver universal emergency services that aim to move people quickly into permanent homes, and for those with the most complex needs, provide long-term solutions. The pandemic has escalated the need to undertake this rapid rehousing transformation.

Rapid Rehousing is fundamentally about understanding the negative impacts that prolonged stays in sometimes chaotic temporary accommodation can have on an individual mental health and any addictions that they may have. Therefore, the aim is to move people out of temporary accommodation and into homes as quickly as possible given the circumstances of the case. It is based the principles of Housing, which is internationally recognised and successful with over 90% sustainability rate in Wales for people who have a history of repeated tenancy failures. However, Carl highlighted that the pandemic had brought to light some of the issues that will need to be overcome, in particular Anti-Social Behaviour and solutions for extremely complex individuals. In this respect, Carl emphasised the role that proportionate policing can have in supporting the Rapid Rehousing approach.

In particular, this approach faces a challenge with regard to finding accommodation for individuals who are still in the midst of addictions, particularly in light of Section 8 of the Misuse of Drugs Act where a landlord is liable for prosecution if they are aware that drugs are being consumed within their property. Therefore, Carl is keen to obtain views of members of the board regarding providing letters of comfort to landlords, as they been used with other Housing First Projects to provide landlords with extra reassurance. The letter sets out that if the individual is on a pathway to abstinence, there will be no enforcement activity. He explained that there are exceptions where individuals are engaged with criminal activity as part of their drug use. Carl asked for opinions on this.

The issue of improving accommodation offers for women leaving custody is included in the Women in Justice Blueprint, which is a key part of this work. However, it has become apparent that often when women are leaving the Criminal Justice system, there are additional barriers to finding long-term housing which often lead to the women being recalled to prison. These include the lack of suitable and affordable housing, temporary accommodation that meets their needs and services that are trained to support someone who is being exploited by a partner. In addition, the very journey from prison back to their home local authority areas also results in repeated failure to attend appointments relating to their housing.

Carl also discussed supporting multi-disciplinary partnership approaches which are proving to be effective both before and during the pandemic. He explained that South Wales Police have been a vital member of the multi-disciplinary team (MDT) approach taken in Cardiff which brings together a number of different key agencies which has had some significant success with regard to supporting homeless people to access services and maintaining the current low numbers of homelessness in Cardiff compared to 3-4 years ago when approximately half of Wales' rough sleeping was in Cardiff.

Carl explained that Welsh Government believe that this is due to the multi-disciplinary approach with Police, Drug and Alcohol Services and Primary Health Services which deliver a Trauma Informed Approach of trying to ensure that those who are sleeping rough are linked to services rather than just being asked to move. He explained Welsh Government are keen to encourage multi-disciplinary approaches across Wales and each force has the potential to play a key progressive role.

**3.1.3.** Chief Constable Jeremy Vaughan from South Wales Police reaffirmed Carl Spillers comments about the multi-disciplinary approach. He explained that he visited the Huggard Centre and observed the high-level quality of care and attention the individuals received in the centre and noted that they work hard to provide the support they require.



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CC Vaughan highlighted that police forces are responding to complaints regarding Anti-Social Behaviour, where there are often drugs and alcohol involved. He explained that whilst the police do intervene, individuals do receive three separate warnings before enforcement happens. CC Vaughan stated that Policing in Wales' feedback regarding the Vagrancy Act was that enforcement should be the last resort because these individuals need help. However, there are exceptions where the situation needs to be escalated quickly to enforcement as violence is involved but emphasised this is not the first course of action.

CC Vaughan also raised the point, that at times there are stories about the police which aren't true and gave the example of the situation with Shelter Cymru regarding illegal evictions. He stressed that Chief Constables in Wales would be keen to hear about the alleged illegal evictions directly as this is not the tone of the relationship that police forces in Wales want to set with people who have vulnerabilities. CC Vaughan highlighted that Policing in Wales are engaged and committed to the multi-disciplinary partnership approach as they do not want to enforce.

Jane Hutt MS thanked everyone for their contributions and invited members to give their views.

**3.1.4.** PCC Cuthbert emphasised the importance of the multi-disciplinary approach. He explained that he is one of two leads for the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners on the issue of local policing and there was a meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2022 where the issue of rough sleeping was discussed. He added that rough sleeping is included in the Beating Crime Plan and there are a range of actions for policing to consider. PCC Cuthbert also mentioned that across England and Wales, the consensus is that policing does have a role to play but it is not the main body on this matter, especially where there are drug and alcohol misuse dependency issues as there is very much a need to work alongside other agencies.

**3.1.5.** Julie James MS expressed her gratitude to all Front-Line workers who have worked tirelessly to ensure this works and feels this is something to be incredibly proud of. She explained that she is conscious of the operational difficulties that Naomi Alleyne outlined but stated it is wonderful to hear that partners are supporting the policy, in particular policing partners as she is aware that both Police Forces and Police and Crime Commissioners are in agreement with this.

Julie James MS discussed the work the police have done with Shelter Cymru by providing training for Front-Line Officers to enable them to make the distinction between the vulnerabilities of the individuals involved and criminal gangs. Julie James MS also extended her thanks to Outreach Workers as this has enabled services to be given to individuals who didn't engage previously. Julie James MS also thanked Lynne Neagle MS for her services around mental health support because of the integration of Outreach and Mental Health has been crucial to this.

Jane Hutt MS reiterated her thanks to everyone for the input today. She added this presentation has come across as a multi-agency response which is gratefully



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received. Jane Hutt MS stated that this has explained the work that is ongoing with regard to homelessness and is very glad that this has been brought to the Policing Partnership Board for Wales today.

### 3.2. Emergency Services Covenant – A Proposal

Jane Hutt MS introduced the item and introduced Chief Constable Jeremy Vaughan.

**3.2.1.** CC Vaughan stated that he wanted to update the board on where policing is currently at with the Emergency Services Covenant and wanted to discuss where policing may oversee it at pace due to the frequency of the Policing Partnership Board for Wales and he is keen to obtain approval on the paper. He explained that he introduced the Emergency Services Covenant at the last Policing Partnership Board for Wales meeting and that he is aware that the UK Government are still working on the Police Covenant which has been preserved in law by the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act, therefore the work being undertaken here needs to be complimentary to that. CC Vaughan stated that there is an opportunity in Wales to consider broader emergency services and the unique contribution that they make and provide to keep the country safe and well.

CC Vaughan stated that the paper highlights some learning from the Armed Forces Covenant which has been useful for the development of the Emergency Services Covenant. He explained that it is not the objective of the covenant to provide emergency services with preferential treatment but rather to recognise the contribution that emergency services make and ensuring they do not experience any disadvantage at work if they suffer from mental health difficulties.

CC Vaughan advised that more work is required with regard to whom the covenant will apply to as well as the implications for service providers in Wales, but he highlighted that so far, all discussions around this have been positive and all services have been supportive.

CC Vaughan explained that policing is seeking to oversee the covenant at the Joint Emergency Services Group and then bring it back to the Policing Partnership Board for Wales. CC Vaughan added that he believes that this is an opportunity for Wales to recognise that unique contribution.

**3.2.2.** Jane Hutt MS thanked CC Vaughan for his contribution and explained that the paper submitted outlines the way forward in terms of the Joint Emergency Services Group and feels this is a positive move. She stated that Welsh Government supports the idea of an Emergency Services Covenant at this early stage but advised that Welsh Government will need to look at the detail and implications.

Jane Hutt MS explained that the covenant should focus on parity of access to services and ensure that staff, ex-staff and their families aren't at any disadvantage so agreed with CC Vaughan that it isn't over and above provision



unless there is evidence of systemic disadvantage for groups. However, Jane Hutt MS raised the point that NHS colleagues noted that the covenant should include all NHS staff rather than just the ambulance service. Jane Hutt MS agreed with his plan to discuss it in the Joint Emergency Services Group and feedback to the Policing Partnership Board for Wales.

### 3.3. Substance Misuse

Jane Hutt MS introduced the topic and explained that Assistant Chief Constable David Thorne would present a paper prepared by the Police. She also welcomed Lynne Neagle MS, Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing, to the meeting whose portfolio area covers substance misuse and offender health.

**3.3.1.** ACC Thorne introduced the item by explaining that the paper submitted with the agenda outlined Policing in Wales' strategy for substance misuse. He stated that there were several asks contained within the paper.

ACC Thorne opened by recognising the work that has been achieved in Wales over the last ten years by Welsh Government and other partners, including service providers, Public Health Wales, Law Enforcement and other partners. He added that Wales was quite far ahead in terms of the harm reduction agenda and referenced the Substance Misuse Strategy 2008-2018 and the subsequent Substance Misuse Delivery Plan 2019-22. However, ACC Thorne stated that policing and law enforcement have come to recognise that drug-related deaths are continuing to rise and the harm that comes from drug addiction, such as acquisitive crime continues.

As a result of this, Policing in Wales believe there needs to be a change in the way that substance misuse is viewed and the approach towards tackling it. Therefore, ACC Thorne is keen to focus on the aims that Policing in Wales would like to see and adjust their approach accordingly. As a result of this, he said that police forces in Wales are encouraging a radical approach to dealing with this difficult issue. ACC Thorne also pointed out that as the Welsh Government Substance Misuse Delivery Plan is due for renewal from 2023 onwards he feels this is an opportunity to work together to review what that may look like over the next few years.

ACC Thorne summarised that in essence the substance misuse strategy for Policing and Police and Crime Commissioners is split into three strands; preventing people becoming addicted to illicit substances, attempting to break the cycle of addiction for people who are already addicted to illegal substances and tackling supply and organised crime groups.

ACC Thorne set out the six key points (from the Policing Paper) that are asks of Welsh Government. These are:

1. The first ask is in relation to funding, in particular the funding that comes from UK Government to Welsh Government and the funding from Welsh

Government to Area Planning Boards. ACC Thorne explained that in advance of this meeting and as agreed at the previous Policing Board a letter was sent from Welsh Government, which helped to clear up some of the issues around funding but he felt there was still more work that could be done in this area.

2. ACC Thorne explained that he felt there were some inconsistencies in how Area Planning Boards operate. He said the Police are looking for a consistent approach towards substance misuse in all Area Planning Boards across Wales. Therefore, the ask is that Welsh Government work with Policing in Wales to create a memorandum of understanding to provide consistency in this respect.
3. ACC Thorne is requesting improved data sharing between the agencies involved in order to share information where there are near fatal drug overdoses.
4. ACC Thorne discussed treatment options, he explained that there is a lot of good work taking place in Wales but wanted to highlight that there are some developing radical approaches such as Diamorphine Assisted Treatment, Opioid Substitution Therapy of which Buprenorphine is an example. ACC Thorne explained that he is aware of the good work Welsh Government did in introducing Buprenorphine as an OST and allocating funding towards the prescription of Buprenorphine. However, Policing in Wales is advocating that this becomes more widespread and requests for Welsh Government's continued support and influence with other agencies.
5. The topic of Out Of Court Disposals was raised by ACC Thorne as Welsh Government's support and investment is required. There are some proposals in a White Paper from the UK Government on this. He explained that there is some research regarding problematic drug users that shows a more punitive approach towards tackling substance misuse can be counterproductive and Welsh Government's support may help police forces support the evidence.
6. ACC Thorne also raised the issue of governance. He explained that he Co-Chairs the National Implementation Board for Drugs Poisoning Prevention with Welsh Government and that this is an excellent forum to discuss a lot of this information. ACC Thorne mentioned that Police Forces and Police and Crime Commissioners have created an All-Wales Chief Officer Group for Substance Misuse to ensure Policing in Wales' governance is appropriate to influence the board. Therefore, ACC Thorne stated that Welsh Government's support in influencing other agencies such as Health Boards and Local Authorities to encourage them to ensure their governance is right to enable issues to be raised appropriately in the National Implementation Board for Drugs Poisoning Prevention was key.

**3.3.2.** Jane Hutt MS thanked ACC Thorne for his contribution and invited the Minister responsible, Lynne Neagle MS to comment.



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**3.3.3.** The Deputy Minister for Mental Health & Wellbeing (DMfMHWB) thanked ACC Thorne for his presentation of the paper. She said it was good that there was recognition that Wales is in a better position in relation to the harm reduction, public health approach, to substance misuse than the UK Government and that this has been our approach for a long time. She responded to ACC Thorne’s offer of support with the renewal of the Substance Misuse Delivery Plan 2019-22 confirming the Welsh Government’s previous offer to liaise and work closely with the police on this.

The Deputy Minister discussed ACC Thorne’s asks by explaining that Welsh Government are aware of Policing in Wales’ concerns regarding funding which were raised at the last Policing Partnership Board for Wales. She advised that the Welsh Government had sought to clarify how much additional funding Welsh Government is putting into the area of substance misuse in its letter dated 13<sup>th</sup> June 2022. She stated that there has been a record increase this year to almost £64m and even with the additional money that has been announced in England as a result of the Dame Carol Black review, Wales is spending more per head than England. In addition to this, Welsh Government have also replaced the funding that was given via the European Structural Fund to keep individuals in work by providing employment support. She explained that those projects would have been lost when the structural funding ceased but Welsh Government invested the money as they recognise it is important to support individuals to stay in employment.

The Deputy Minister also addressed the issue regarding Area Planning Boards. She stated that all Area Planning Boards operate within the guidance provided by Welsh Government. She added that there is inevitably going to be some variation with Area Planning Boards in Wales as their role is to respond to local needs but she would welcome discussions with officials to discuss how Welsh Government can support this nationally and make any necessary improvements.

The Deputy Minister advised that she has asked that Police, Police and Crime Commissioners and HMPPS are involved in the renewal of the Substance Misuse Delivery Plan to strengthen joint actions. She added that once this plan is complete, Welsh Government will be in a better position to consider what actions are necessary including a memorandum of understanding, if required.

The Deputy Minister also discussed the issue of data sharing, she stated that she recognises the importance of this, particularly to ensure that non-fatal overdoses can be learned from. She expressed her gratitude to ACC Thorne for the joint charring he undertakes alongside Welsh Government of the National Implementation Board for Drugs Poisoning Prevention. DMfMHWB explained that she has asked Officials to work closely with police and other partners on this as well as working with Harm Reduction Leads and Case Review Co-ordinators across Wales to ensure that drug-deaths are reviewed in real-time.

Lynne Neagle MS responded to the ask regarding Heroin Assisted Treatment (HAT). She explained that there have been discussions around this for some time and that the Welsh Government have made a significant investment in Buprenorphine of £9m over



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the next three years which will take the total investment in Buvidal to £12.5m. Therefore she stated that she is not in a position to make any commitments to investments until this has been completed. However, Lynne Neagle advised that Area Planning Boards are able to consider this, as per the letter that was sent to Area Planning Board Chairs in March 2020, and that she was content for the Police to continue any discussions around HATs with APBs.

The DMfMHWB explained that Out Of Court Disposals are not straightforward because Criminal Justice isn't devolved to Welsh Government but stated she is keen to explore all options to divert young people out of the Criminal Justice System. She suggested looking at this collectively by involving HMPPS and Police.

In relation to governance, the DMfMWWB welcomed the joint working that is currently ongoing such as the National Implementation Board for Drugs Poisoning Prevention but stated that she is happy to have discussions regarding how this can be strengthened, to look at concerns that policing has with other agencies. She stressed that the review of the Substance Misuse Delivery Plan provides an opportunity to consider these issues and ensure the governance is correct going forward.

**3.3.4.** PCC Michael stated that he applauds the fact this discussion is taking place and the fact that the Welsh Government takes a Public Health approach to substance misuse.

PCC Michael wanted to note that a considerable amount of funding for treatment services comes from policing and the probation service. He explained that there is a joint responsibility for providing services and gave the example of Dyfodol in Swansea which has been expanded to ensure it is a seamless service from the custody suite into prison and when individuals are released from prison through to probation.

PCC Michael highlighted that there was a loss of momentum following CC Vaughan's presentation regarding Policing in Wales' concerns addressing areas such as drug-deaths with Swansea and Neath Port Talbot being the most significant single indicator where we were second and third to Blackpool in the whole of the UK in terms of the worst levels of drug deaths and this problem has not been resolved.

PCC Michael explained that a significant amount of work was carried out, for example Public Health worked with Angharad Metcalfe in his office to develop an alliance approach which was successful. However, after a couple of years of work, the Health Board decided to go on a different journey, so the work was aborted.

PCC Michael added that he agrees with the asks in ACC Thorne's paper but feels there is a need to be more ambitious. He also mentioned that he feels the Area Planning Board system does not work from his experience and that he feels that Area Planning Boards do not have the resources or generality of capacity to achieve what is needed.



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**3.3.5.** PCC Llywelyn stated that he is in agreement with PCC Michael in relation to the collegially constructive partnership working endeavour that is in place and added that the Policing Partnership Board for Wales has taken this to the next level which he is really pleased about. However, he expressed some concerns about the Deputy Minister’s response to ACC Thorne’s paper This is primarily because he feels Wales are in a better position than England at present. However, the language and tone in the UK Government’s strategy’s language is a little more punitive in nature so there is a risk that if Wales doesn’t get ahead of the game with the substance misuse approach , it will get absorbed into the UK Government’s Strategy which will see operational policing taking in a different dynamic.

PCC Llywelyn addressed the DMfMHWB’s comments regarding Welsh Government investing significant funding into the use of Buvidal. He recognised that this is true but highlighted that Buvidal is promoted as being hugely successful in relation to reducing drug-related deaths, however, Wales is not ahead of the curve in relation to drug-related deaths as they have not been able to have a significant impact on this. Therefore, PCC Llewelyn hopes to be able to address this point further.

**3.3.6.** CC Kelly mentioned that she has seen far too many drug-deaths in her career and stated that policing is seeing another generation of young people in Wales whose deaths could have been avoided. She wanted to pick up on the Deputy Minister’s points. CC Kelly feels that there is a potential to work together on the future Substance Misuse Delivery Plan. CC Kelly advised that she feels that Area Planning Board money is going towards buildings rather than into services that are actually reaching out to the community and providing early intervention that could really help. CC Kelly explained that policing would be delighted to work with the Welsh Government on this.

CC Kelly added that an awful lot of public money is going into substance misuse services but questioned if we are aware of what services are working and if we understand the impact it is having and asked if good practice is being shared quickly and robustly enough to make a difference, such as by working innovatively as ACC Thorne suggested and share across Wales.

**3.3.7.** Joanne Hopkins spoke on behalf of Tracey Cooper, stating that she is committed to looking at how Public Health can take the next steps forward around their approach and how to reinvigorate this work going forward.

Joanne Hopkins also discussed the work that the ACE Support Hub carrying out alongside Welsh Government with organisations as part of the Area Planning Boards to look at the Trauma Informed Approach. She explained that this is based on the organisation and how they are working to understand the experiences the people they support are presenting with. However, she mentioned that there is an opportunity for join-up as they are looking at more innovative ways of working.

Joanne Hopkins stated that Public Health welcome the decision to evaluate the approach around Buvidal as she is keen to ensure the underlying cause of substance misuse is addressed.



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**3.3.8.** PCC Cuthbert wanted to echo CC Kelly's statement, particularly where she mentioned that policing is keen to work alongside Welsh Government. He feels this is the way forward as he attended the UK Drugs Summit organised by the Minister for Crime and Policing, Kit Malthouse and explained that there was an enormous seriousness about tackling substance misuse. PCC Cuthbert is keen to continue discussions on this subject to ensure progress is made collaboratively.

**3.3.9.** The Deputy Minister responded by saying the Welsh Government continues to invest large amounts of money in this agenda and that she wanted to continue discussions with the Police as the Substance Misuse Delivery Plan is developed.

DMfMHWB also addressed CC Kelly's comments regarding funding awarded to buildings by stating that this should not be the case as there is discreet allocation for capital and stated that the biggest amount of money is going to revenue funding. She also addressed PCC Michael's point by saying that she would be happy to continue discussions regarding Area Planning Boards. DMfMHWB also agreed with PCC Michael's comments around education by pointing out that Welsh Government are jointly funding the Wales Police School's Programme with Policing in Wales. It was noted that work is currently in progress on the new curriculum which provides an opportunity to intervene early with children and young people.

The Deputy Minister closed by stating she is very happy to have further discussion with the police on these issues.

**3.3.10.** PCC Llywelyn questioned if there was a timescale of when the new strategy is likely to be published and mentioned that whilst further discussions are important, he feels there is a need to move at pace in relation to this. DMfMHWB highlighted that work is progressing on this and that engagement work would take place this year.

PCC Llywelyn also accepted the need for evaluation in relation to Buprenorphine but didn't want to see it as a barrier for new and further innovative approaches in terms of investment. He questioned if Welsh Government would support Police Forces putting forward Diamorphine Assisted Treatment, as this has been seen in Cleveland and West Midlands. The DMfMHWB advised that she would respond via writing to PCC Llywelyn on this question.

Jane Hutt MS thanked members of the board for their presentations and additionally thanked others for their contributions.

#### **4. Any issues to be escalated from the Policing in Wales meeting**

Jane Hutt MS asked PCC Llywelyn as the Chair of Policing in Wales if there were any issues that required escalation to the Policing Partnership Board for Wales.

PCC Llywelyn advised that there were no issues that need to be raised today. He added that the Chair will be handed over to PCC Cuthbert from the next meeting.



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Jane Hutt MS closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending, she added that she will look forward to seeing everyone in person at the meeting in September. Jane Hutt also extended her thanks to Mick Antoniw MS for staying as long as he could and to Lynne Neagle MS for attending in entire meeting.

Jane Hutt MS stated that this is a cross-government responsibility in terms of the policing partnership which she feels comes across so clearly in the Justice for Wales document.

## 5. Partner updates by exception

None declared, written updates submitted for noting.

## 6. Any Other Business

The next Policing Partnership Board for Wales meeting was discussed as there was some interest in the meeting taking place in person. Jane Hutt MS mentioned the possibility of the meeting taking place in a hybrid format, PCC Cuthbert agreed that a hybrid meeting would be ideal to facilitate the best attendance.

## Date and time of next meeting

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022 at 3pm