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Policing Partnership Board for Wales

Hybrid meeting - via Microsoft Teams / Amroth Room, Cathays Park 2, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ

Thursday 21st September 2023

Minutes

Attendees

Mark Drakeford MS	First Minister, Welsh Government (Chair)
Hannah Blythyn MS	Deputy Minister for Social Partnership (Co-Chair)
Jane Hutt MS	Minister for Social Justice and Chief Whip
David TC Davies	Secretary of State for Wales
Dr. Richard Lewis	Chief Constable, Dyfed Powys Police
Pam Kelly	Chief Constable, Gwent Police
Jeremy Vaughan	Chief Constable, South Wales Police
Amanda Blakeman	Chief Constable, North Wales Police
Rachel Williams	Deputy Chief Constable, Gwent Police
Dafydd Llywelyn	Police and Crime Commissioner, Dyfed Powys
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
Nick Wood	Deputy Chief Executive, NHS Wales, Welsh Government
Gary Haggaty	Deputy Director, Community Safety Division, Welsh Government
Lucy Akhtar	Senior Manager, Crime and Justice Team, Welsh Government
Leanne Lewis	Crime and Justice Team, Welsh Government
Susie Abson	Head of Policy, Future Economy, Welsh Government
David Willis	Head of Tackling Poverty, Welsh Government
Tracy Cooper	Public Health Wales
Joanne Hopkins	Public Health Wales
Chris Batchelor	Deputy Director International and Domestic Engagement and Strategy Directorate,
Home Office	
Gregg Dyer	Head of Domestic Affairs, Office of the Secretary of State for Wales
Chris Jennings	Executive Director Wales, HM Prison and Probation Service
Chris Llewelyn	Chief Executive, WLGA
Naomi Alleyne	Director of Social Services and Housing, WLGA
Mark Brace	Interim Head of the Safer Communities Network, 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
Umar Hussain	Chief Financial Officer, South Wales Police
Paul Morris	Head of Police Liaison Unit
Christina Fraser	Chief Inspector, Police Liaison Unit
Owen Woolcock	Analyst/Policy Officer, Police Liaison Unit
Asif Afsar	All-Wales Business Co-Ordinator, Policing in Wales
Joanna Huddleston	Administrator, Police Liaison Unit

Apologies

Mick Antoniwi MS	Counsel General for Wales, Welsh Government
Jeff Cuthbert	Police and Crime Commissioner, Gwent
Wayne Jones	Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, North Wales
Jenny Hopkins	Chief Crown Prosecutor, Crown Prosecution Service
Judith Paget	Director General HSSG/Chief Executive NHS Wales, Welsh Government
Amy Rees	Chief Executive, HMPPS
ACC Ifan Charles	Assistant Chief Constable, Dyfed Powys Police
T/ACC Jason Davies	Assistant Chief Constable, South Wales Police



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Actions arising from the meeting	
Financial Risk/Resilience of Welsh forces to be discussed at the next Policing Partnership Board for Wales.	PLU
To include Policing in Wales' funding contributions in the financial risk/resilience discussion at the next meeting.	PLU

1. Welcome and Chair's Address

The First Minister opened the meeting and welcomed members to the Policing Partnership Board for Wales, with a welcome also being extended to the Secretary of State for Wales.

First Minister noted that this would be Chris Jennings' last meeting in his role as Executive Director, HMPPS Wales. The FM thanked Chris for the considerable contribution he has made to effective partnership working in Wales, adding that Ian Barrow would succeed Chris.

The First Minister advised that he met with Bryn Hughes at the Police Bravery Awards, a campaigner for the Elizabeth Cross medal to be given posthumously in recognition of those in the emergency services who have lost their lives in the course of duty. The FM added that he met some of the officers nominated for the Police Bravery Awards in the Senedd alongside Andrew RT Davies MS on 20th September 2023 and noted Welsh Government will be formally marking support by submitting a written statement regarding the Medals for Fallen Heroes Campaign.

[Written Statement: National Police Memorial Day and support for the Medals for Fallen Heroes campaign \(26 September 2023\) | GOV.WALES](#)

2. Welcome and comments from the Secretary of State for Wales

Secretary of State for Wales, David TC Davies MP thanked the Chair for the opportunity to attend and provide an update, commenting that he is aware of the work that the police undertake overlaps with work that is achieved via the Senedd, so he feels it is useful that police are able to meet with Welsh Government in this forum. He highlighted that if there is a need to liaise with UK Government Cabinet, he would be happy to help with this, as policing is a reserved matter under the remit of the Home Office but this shouldn't prevent individuals in the public sector having discussions with other elected bodies which can be beneficial to the public.

3. Trust and Confidence in Policing

3.a. Engagement session with Baroness Casey

Paul Morris advised that trust and confidence had been discussed at the Policing in Wales meeting earlier in September and that the consensus was that while there is a lot of good work taking place this had been fully covered at the last Policing Partnership Board for Wales meeting, so only a brief update would be required today.

PCC Michael explained that Baroness Casey's review mainly focussed on issues that the Metropolitan Police were facing; he noted that these challenges would be present in all police forces as no force is without its human failings, but questioned what should be done about them. Welsh forces are not in the same position but it's acknowledged that there is an issue of trust and confidence with communities across Wales, so Policing in Wales is keen to learn from Baroness Casey. PCC Michael advised that he approached Baroness Casey to see if she would agree to a session with Policing in Wales to be able to apply the lessons she learnt from the Metropolitan Police to Welsh Forces and other public services. He added that this meeting was due to take place on 10th October 2023.

3.b. Update on actions agreed at the PPBfW in June

CC Kelly provided an update on the actions agreed at the Policing Partnership Board for Wales in June 2023:



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- Seeking support from Welsh Government and partners to establish a new independent advocacy service for ethnic minority groups as these systems are complex to navigate.
- Exploring and establishing an independent systemic review model reinforcing the confidence that public services have in existing mechanisms across organisations with the ability to share learning back and then acting upon this.
- Obtaining Ministerial support in engaging with both Local Authority and Health colleagues in relation to the issue of unauthorised encampments.

She explained that there is a considerable amount of positive work ongoing in relation to the All-Wales Criminal Justice Anti-Racism plan and highlighted that the partnership approach is really effective. She highlighted the piloting of cultural competency training involving all partners across Criminal Justice in Wales. CC Kelly explained that with regards to Advocacy services, policing is listening to what communities are saying and even though there are advocacy services, they appear not to be fully utilised by ethnic minority communities for raising concerns about racist behaviour and discriminatory practice. Work is ongoing to engage with community representative groups to understand why existing advocacy mechanisms are not adequately trusted.

CC Kelly explained that a real focus is being placed on how Criminal Justice partners work together to understand systemic learning, and this is currently being reviewed to include private and public sector review models. She added that she hopes to return with an update on the progress of this work in terms of racism and Criminal Justice partners.

Joanne Hopkins added that Public Health Wales are going to support the evaluation of cultural competency training work and noted an event is due to take place on 20th October, with the hope that it will bring academics together from across Wales and potentially wider to create a network. She added that we can bring learning from work on anti-racism, discrimination, racial trauma etc. to complement that work.

Paul Morris also provided reassurance that Ch Supt. Ian Roberts has been doing specific work in relation to the Gypsy Roma Traveller community to ensure there are protocols in place regarding unauthorised encampments. He acknowledged there are issues previously highlighted by the Equality and Social Justice Committee's review in relation to this and stressed that work is ongoing and will be finalised within the coming months.

The First Minister acknowledged that trust and confidence had been discussed by Minister for Social Justice and Chief Whip, Jane Hutt MS and PCC Dunbobbin during their monthly bilateral meeting and this item should no longer be a standing agenda item. However, he added that there should always be a space on the agenda for specific issues where trust and confidence is at their core and gave the example of Ch Supt. Roberts' work which would be an agenda item in its own right. He stressed the importance of not losing sight of those specific aspects of work which have an impact on trust and confidence in policing.

The First Minister handed the Chair over to Hannah Blythyn MS, Deputy Minister for Social Partnership.

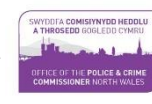
4. Cost of living – Impact on Communities and Services

4.a. Retail Crime

CC Blakeman opened by stating that she manages the NPCC National Portfolio of Acquisitive Crime which covers Retail Crime. She explained the cost of retail theft is in the region of £2bn and around 8 million incidents of theft a year are reported to policing. CC Blakeman described some of the drivers of retail theft that are being noted, such as seasonality. She commented that the financial situation that some people find themselves in is contributing towards this, with issues such as the Ukraine war affecting the cost of living and supply chains, which in turn affects the second-hand market where individuals are able to sell their stolen goods. She highlighted that the drivers have been reviewed



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nationally to address the cost to policing. She discussed the different operations currently ongoing which demonstrate the scale of the current situation around this, explaining there is a sliding scale of offending which starts with young people getting involved with criminality, where policing's response is to divert these young people away from criminality, but she stated that this isn't the essence of the problem. CC Blakeman highlighted that the two areas policing perceive as the greater problems are persistent offending and higher-scale Organised Crime Groups who are exploiting individuals, so there is an opportunity to understand that collectively.

She added that the aim is to better understanding Organised Crime, therefore policing is working with major retailers who are significantly impacted and reviewing how they can utilise their support. This could be by considering a voluntary contribution to create capacity to be able to map those individuals that are organising this criminality, considering additional legislation and tackling those drivers such as the stolen goods markets and diverting people away from these forms of criminality through Integrated Offender Management.

CC Blakeman explained the next step to achieve this is to try and create a uniform approach to crime recording, which ACC Alex Goss will be working on, increasing collaboration between policing and retailers in relation to how information is shared. She highlighted PCCs are fundamental to this as well as the business forums that are already in place to enable policing to have a working relationship with the retail community.

4.a.1. The Chair thanked CC Blakeman for describing the challenges as well as the action being taken; she advised that Welsh Government has published its Retail Action Plan which contains an action on Retail Crime that aims to bring the intelligence together by working with policing.

4.b. Cost of Living: Impacts on Policing – Updated Report

CC Lewis wanted to highlight a few issues within the report circulated prior to the meeting, stating the internal impact on forces across Wales is likely to continue into 2024 as the Bevan Report mentions that living standards have not increased over the course of the last 12 months. He stated most forces conclude that the Cost of Living crisis has likely had an impact on crime, stressing that it is important to say *likely* as forces believe it is the Cost of Living that has had an impact on some of the serious acquisitive crimes as mentioned by CC Blakeman as well as potentially other crime types such as Violence and Domestic Abuse.

CC Lewis commented on the internal impacts of the Cost of Living Crisis on workforces across Wales by stating that forces are seeing financial vulnerability increase, which is a risk for all forces in terms of vulnerability to factors such as corruption. He stated that there is a great deal of work that needs to be done internally to support staff. He added that some of the other factors that are being noticed is an increase in secondary employment of those working within the police service; CC Lewis highlighted that it is preferable if this does not happen within the police service but stressed there are safeguards in place in the form of a strict regime within which secondary employment is approved.

CC Lewis suggested there is a need to be proactive in the way issues are addressed, including more diversionary schemes for those offending and ensuring forces understand pressures employees face in terms of the Cost of Living Crisis and the provision of information and support to ensure fewer employees fall into financial arrears.

4.c. Impact of Budget Pressures on Public Services

Mr Hussain opened by explaining that this is the first comprehensive survey of policing finances across the UK and in terms of overall costs, people costs are the main expenditure within policing budgets. He commented that police staff budgets have seen the biggest impact but there are already vacancy levels within police staff budgets of an average of 6% which equates to approximately 5000 police staff posts



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with the vacancy levels set to increase, whereas the number of police officers are being maintained and the number of PCSOs has increased slightly.

He discussed the Pay Awards, noting that £13bn is spent on pay so a 1% increase with Pay Awards would result in a cost increase of £130m which makes a big difference between pay award assumptions and impacts on pay. He advised that the majority of forces have budgeted 2%, however for 23/24 the Pay Award has been agreed at 7% adding that Home Office has agreed to fund the level of additional pay through grants but emphasised that concerns over finances for 24/25 remain.

Mr Hussain described measures that forces took in an attempt to manage finances for 23/24 which includes the utilisation of reserves which will need to be replaced and reviewing the workforce mix/staff numbers as alluded to previously. He commented that the position looks to be similar for 24/25 with potential continued use of reserves and potential reverse workforce modernisation across policing. Mr Hussain also wanted to highlight the issue of capital financing which involves interest payments on borrowing. He stated that forces are at different stages in relation to their capital infrastructure but the indications are that capital financing expenditure needs to increase on a yearly basis as borrowing for capital expenditure has increased by over £1bn in two years which is not sustainable, so alternative sources of funding will need to be addressed. Mr Hussain's final consideration was reserves as they are generally reducing across the service with a number of forces only having contingency reserves remaining by 24/25.

He summarised by saying that there is a fixed element in budgets around Police Officer pay which is linked to the Police Uplift Programme, in addition to non-pay such as contracts, goods and services which is 23% resulting in ¾ of the budget being accounted for which is insufficient to solve the budget pressures which policing is facing. However, the burden for policing isn't uniform and it falls heavier on some forces than others due to funding formulas.

4.d. Cost of Living Welsh Government approach

David Willis, Head of Tackling Poverty attended to provide an update on the support that Welsh Government is offering. He outlined a number of schemes provided by Welsh Government in terms of immediate Cost of Living Support including the Discretionary Assistance Fund which supports individuals and families across Wales that are facing extreme financial hardship as a result of the Cost of Living Crisis which has provided support to over 73,000 people to date. The Single Advice Service includes the Claim What's Yours Campaign in addition to Welsh Government having allocated around £16m over the last few years to support food organisations to help tackle food poverty.

He discussed the Welsh Government's Social Wage Interventions programmes that help individuals retain their money such as the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, Childcare Offer, which lessens the burden of childcare costs and Universal Free School Meals.

He also discussed longer-term preventative actions including the Young Person's Guarantee which provides individuals under the age of 25 the offer of work, education, training or self-employment, Working Wales Service and Community Employability Programme. David explained that good employability skills help minimise periods of unemployment and improves an individual's income, with the hope that this avoids the possibility of individuals potentially turning to criminal activity in order to obtain money.

David provided a brief description of the Child Poverty Strategy for Wales which is in the process of being updated; the last version of this was from 2015 and he noted that although the objectives are still broadly relevant, there has since been significant events such as Brexit, the Covid-19 pandemic and the Cost of Living Crisis which need to be reflected within the strategy. There are five strategic objectives within the strategy which are:

- To reduce cost and maximise incomes
- To create pathways out of poverty



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- To support child and family wellbeing
- To ensure those in poverty are treated with dignity and respect
- To ensure greater levels of collaboration

4.d.1. CC Kelly stated that she wanted to make an observation on the connection between the presentations but queried how work could be carried out on this in partnership to ensure work is not duplicated. She feels that Neighbourhood Policing Teams need to be aware of the work that Mr Willis mentioned to be able to signpost people to try and prevent some of the pressures within individual homes. She also stated that in terms of Mr Hussain's presentations, she wanted to raise a concern about how policing's infrastructure is going to be supported as some forces are borrowing money to buy important infrastructure to keep the service running, which is not a sustainable position. She gave the example of Gwent force requiring a new custody suite but there is no capital budget to build this. Welsh Government agreed to share a range of resources on income maximisation with Policing in Wales colleagues and partners.

4.d.2. PCC Michael believes that all organisations are looking at the Cost of Living crisis with regards to its impact, stating that organisations can see the potential damage this will cause as well as the increase in crime. He added that he wanted to mention one positive, which was that South Wales Police have put additional investment into Dyfodol, which builds on the previous drug intervention programme in order for the same service that is provided in custody suites to be provided inside prisons and to continue for a year after release. PCC Michael highlighted this is related to the area of South Wales being identified as being an outlier in the reduction of acquisitive crime. He commented that looking forward to next year's financial situation, he is concerned about the position that policing is heading towards as Mr Hussain mentioned; the Pay Award was agreed at 7% but in the next financial year, forces will be expected to maintain police officer numbers from the Uplift Programme, which will cost more than they do in the current year.

4.d.3. Chris Jennings queried whether HMPPS are utilising their communication channels to reach individuals, highlighting that the Probation Service supervises individuals across Wales who will be the most in need, so he feels it is a good opportunity to share information and his offer to Welsh Government teams is if they think they can use HMPPS to reach individuals then he is happy to follow up on this.

4.d.4. CC Vaughan echoed the points made today, addressing the quality of the presentations and noting his thanks to Mr Hussain. He feels there would be value in returning to this at a future date to address the specific risk and resilience issues in Wales, particularly how they compare to their counterparts in English forces. It was agreed that financial Risk/Resilience of Welsh forces would be discussed at the next Policing Partnership Board for Wales.

4.d.5. DPCC Thomas feels it would be useful to include the funding contribution Policing in Wales make, particularly to local services when this is addressed in the future, as she feels the contributions that OPCCs make in terms of joint services is an element that needs to be considered.

4.d.6. CC Blakeman commented that she doesn't want to lose sight of the fact that there are individuals profiting from this and that she is keen to help those who need support but feels there needs to be a clear strategy across Wales that Policing in Wales will not tolerate those groups who are profiting from other people and stated that there needs to be a firm line in relation to that.

4.d.7. Chris Batchelor highlighted that the Home Office have a meeting which is due to take place prior to the Police Grant Settlement being announced. He queried if Policing in Wales may like to identify if there are any specific risks to Wales which could be communicated into the funding teams prior to decisions being made on the grant.



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5. Right Care, Right Person

ACC Gunney provided an update on the key progress that has been made to date and added that she hopes to provide positive reassurance about the collaborative approach to Right Care Right Person (RCRP) across Wales. She described the proposal for Welsh Operational Alignment which involves a National Team that is working with ACC Gilmer where her role acts as a co-ordinator role on behalf of forces in Wales and each force will have their own lead where they will develop their own implementation plan.

ACC Gunney advised that since the last PPBfW meeting in June where DCC Bacon presented, a National Partnership Agreement (NPA) has been delivered in England, so many forces in England have started their RCRP journey and are taking the lessons learned and the good practice from that as well as all risks and issues being shared nationally within a tactical board where all Welsh forces are represented.

She highlighted that RCRP is supporting existing Welsh policy including the Right Care, Right Place, Right Time Strategy which is in place until 2026 as well as supporting the principles of the Mental Health Crisis Concordat and Mental Health Strategy for Wales, therefore there are many elements of existing strategies that cross over to RCRP.

ACC Gunney explained the proposal for operational delivery is based on a phased incremental approach. The first phase is preparation; she advised that she has been communicating with Matt Downton from Welsh Government and engaging with stakeholders, the aim being to start at the bottom which is all about benchmarking data which will be done in partnership. She advised that all forces in Wales are looking to go live in January 2024 involving a 18-24 month roll-out plan with some variation between forces with the ability to assess impact at each milestone.

She discussed that one element that needs ongoing work is governance and added that she is keen for a standing agenda item at key All-Wales meetings including the Welsh Chief Officer Group for Mental Health. Work will be carried out with Matt Downton to address what governance looks like in Wales with regards to RCRP but she stressed that she is keen to engage with Public Service Boards and Regional Safeguarding Boards locally.

ACC Gunney noted that an NPA was put in place in England, noting that the development of something similar in Wales wasn't essential, but would be helpful in relation to implementation as it would support partnership commitment and would provide an opportunity for stakeholders to contribute to the agreement to create consistency. She stressed that it would be a partnership document rather than a police-led document; she is hoping to cross-reference the existing Welsh policy and strategies as previously mentioned to create a bespoke document for Wales. ACC Gunney requested to work as a tactical working group to develop this for Wales.

5.1. PCC Michael highlighted ACC Gunney's point in relation to the support required with the approach to this as he has some concerns due to communications coming from England stating that this work could be carried out within the next month would give the wrong impression. He commented that the logical way that ACC Gunney is taking is reassuring and that it is different to implementation in England, but that this would require much greater widespread engagement.

5.2. CC Vaughan stated that Policing in Wales is keen to learn from what has been implemented elsewhere in relation to RCRP as this would deliver the UK Government's desire to deliver the best care to people who need it. CC Vaughan reinforced the point that the intention in Wales is to take a methodological approach in partnership but advised there is pressure to deliver on this, which is the reason for the approach to delivery in England.



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6. Any issues to be escalated from the Policing in Wales meeting

PCC Dunbobbin advised that this item was covered during discussions within the substantive items.

7. Partner updates by exception

7a.1. CC Blakeman stated that in relation to the items that have been discussed, forces find themselves trying to prioritise areas that repeatedly cause an issue. She explained that the first item that she wanted to mention was Sexual Assault Referral Centres as a vast amount of work has taken place in relation to ISO Accreditation but in North Wales paediatric support is a challenge so they are currently collaborating with the North West region which is an issue when premises are being ISO Accredited. Secondly, in relation to Child Safeguarding and more specifically the partner provision as observed by HMICFRS, it becomes increasingly difficult to gain traction with Local Authorities and even more so in terms of financial challenges; she gave the example of children in police custody as an ongoing issue. She explained that her request from Welsh Government is in relation to escalation of these matters, as if there is an opportunity to hold these agencies that should be working collaboratively to account, then she would appreciate support with this.

7a.2. PCC Michael mentioned Facial Recognition Technology as referenced in the paper circulated; he noted that there are places where Facial Recognition Technology is being perceived as a threat and commented that if there was any interest in learning more about this, there was a demonstration in the Police and Crime Panel earlier in the week which proved its value, adding that he feels this could be seen as a positive if managed correctly. CC Vaughan advised he would be happy to facilitate a session if there was interest from partners learning more about Facial Recognition Technology.

7a.3. PCC Llywelyn wanted to note that the Police Memorial Service was due to take place on Sunday 24 September and noted that Dyfed Powys Police were saddened by the recent death of serving Officer Insp Gareth Earp in a Road Traffic Collision, adding that thoughts will be with his family who will be in attendance at the Police Memorial Service.

7c. Joanne Hopkins mentioned as co-lead for Criminal Justice in Wales she has responsibility for Early Intervention/Prevention; she noted that North Wales Police and South Wales Police are ahead of the game with the Trauma-Informed Approach being taken across the Criminal Justice system but stated she is pleased with the progress being made.

7d. Chris Batchelor noted the King's Speech is expected on 7th November 2023 and that the Home Office will have legislation included that is not announced but he has been assured that the policy team have been engaging with their counterparts in Welsh Government on areas where there may be mutual interest.

7e. Chris Jennings mentioned issues with prison capacity as highlighted in the paper circulated, adding that the system has been under considerable pressure for some time. He raised concerns about this and stated if the measures already taken are not enough, Ministers will need to make decisions about what HMPPS' response may be but if this does happen then it will be at short notice.

7h. Mark Brace highlighted that this week had been Safer Communities Awareness week and that there were a number of learning sessions which are on the website if needed. He advised that the Safer Communities Awards were being launched which will be held in November to celebrate partnership working across the community safety area and added that he would encourage nominations.

8. Any Other Business

8.1. The Chair informed the meeting that it is the Welsh Government's intention to shortly announce the commencement of work on the practicalities on the devolution of policing and that Welsh



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Government intend to issue a written statement on this in due course.

Date and time of next meeting

Monday 18th December 2023 2-4pm