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Policing Partnership Board for Wales

Microsoft Teams

Monday 16th December 2024 10:00 – 12:00

Minutes

Attendees

Jane Hutt MS	Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip (Chair)
Dame Nia Griffith	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Wales
Dr. Richard Lewis	Chief Constable, Dyfed Powys Police
Mark Hobrough	Chief Constable, Gwent Police
Jeremy Vaughan	Chief Constable, South Wales Police
Amanda Blakeman	Chief Constable, North Wales Police
Dafydd Llywelyn	Police and Crime Commissioner, Dyfed Powys
Jane Mudd	Police and Crime Commissioner, Gwent
Andy Dunbobbin	Police and Crime Commissioner, North Wales
Emma Wools	Police and Crime Commissioner, South Wales
Eleri Thomas	Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, Gwent
Liz Lalley	Director, Risk, Resilience and Community Safety, Welsh Government
Mike Connolly	Deputy Director, Community Safety Division, Welsh Government
Emma Watkins	Deputy Director for Budget and Government Business in Welsh Treasury
Sioned Evans	Director General, Education, Culture and Welsh Language, Welsh Government
Alison Thomas	Head of Transport Behaviour Change, Welsh Government
Nick Wood	Deputy Chief Executive NHS Wales, Welsh Government
Claire Russell-Griffiths	Senior Manager, Crime and Justice Team, Welsh Government
Leanne Lewis	Manager, Crime and Justice Team, Welsh Government
Jenna Harris	Crime and Justice Officer, Welsh Government
Tracy Cooper	Public Health Wales
Joanne Hopkins	Public Health Wales
Naomi Alleyne	Director of Social Services and Housing, WLGA
Adam Gardner	Deputy Director for UK Domestic and Overseas Territories, Home Office
Gregg Dyer	Head of Domestic Affairs, Office of the Secretary of State for Wales
Ian Barrow	Executive Director Wales, HM Prison and Probation Service
Mark Brace	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
Paul Morris	Head of Police Liaison Unit
Paul Biggs	Chief Inspector, Police Liaison Unit
Laura Armitt	All-Wales Business Co-Ordinator, Policing in Wales
Wayne Jones	Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, North Wales
Joanna Huddleston	Administrator, Police Liaison Unit

Apologies

Chris Llewelyn	Chief Executive, WLGA
Judith Paget	Director General HSSG/Chief Executive NHS Wales, Welsh Government
Amy Rees	Chief Executive, HMPPS



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Actions arising from the meeting

Paul Morris to amend the Forward Work Programme document, ensuring the feedback received is reflected in the document and to circulate the revised document.	Paul Morris
Jane Hutt MS to raise the matter of increased demand on Mountain Rescue Services within Welsh Government.	Jane Hutt MS

1. Welcome and Chair's Address

The Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip opened the meeting and welcomed Dame Nia Griffith with an additional welcome being extended to Home Office Officials. She noted she was due to meet with the Policing Minister, Dame Diana Johnson MP on the 9th December but this unfortunately had to be rescheduled for the 6th January 2025.

She stated that she wanted to reflect on the current situation, mentioning that in the last meeting, there was agreement from attendees to refresh the Policing Partnership Board for Wales (PPBfW) Terms of Reference to maximise the Board's value as a forum and ensure the PPBfW is focused on delivering shared priorities that keep Wales safe. There was also agreement to developing a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Welsh Government and Policing in Wales and she noted that she will hold bi-lateral meetings with the relevant Cabinet Secretaries within Welsh Government to agree the MoU which will be followed by a formal sign off in Cabinet.

The Chair also gave her congratulations to CC Mark Hobrough on his appointment as Chief Constable of Gwent Police.

2. Revised Terms of Reference for the Policing Partnership Board for Wales – For Sign Off

Paul Morris noted that the feedback received at the last meeting was incorporated as well as the comments from Dame Nia Griffith's office, so if the board were agreeable, he believes that the revised Terms of Reference for the Board could be signed off.

2.1. The Chair concluded by stating that the feedback obtained has been helpful and she acknowledged that the Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually in December. She ended by clarifying that all were in agreement to sign off the Policing Partnership Board for Wales Terms of Reference.

3. Proposed Forward Work Programme for the Policing Partnership Board for Wales

The Chair introduced the item by explaining that the purpose is to ensure that the Policing Partnership Board for Wales works for all the organisations that are involved; she stated that Policing in Wales are a trusted partner of Welsh Government and that Welsh Government value the shared commitment and joint working in Wales.

3.1. PCC Llywelyn echoed the comments with regards to partnership working as Policing in Wales values what can be achieved in partnership with Welsh Government and other devolved agencies across Wales. He described the document and highlighted that the importance of that relationship is reflected within the Forward Work Programme for the Policing Partnership Board for Wales. The document refers to strengthening partnership working but he feels there is a need to acknowledge that document should be flexible as Commissioners' Police and Crime Plans are currently being developed and he highlighted that there is also a need to be mindful of UK Government ambitions.

3.2. CC Blakeman commented that the programme is a good basis for highlighting areas that need to be focused on by the Board as well as confirming that they align with Police and Crime Plans, so she stressed there is a need for flexibility as Policing in Wales work through Police Landscape Reform.

3.3. Paul Morris noted his gratitude to Welsh Government Officials for circulating the document across various policy leads in Welsh Government and explained that there have been some suggestions that will be worked through. He added that during the Policing in Wales meeting, PCC Wools suggested a



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slight refinement of the mental health and substance misuse elements to incorporate them under a wider heading of collaboration between Policing, Health and Social Care.

3.4. CC Blakeman queried whether there is a requirement to be more explicit with regards to Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence as it is mentioned but she feels there should be more detail as it is one of the major issues being addressed currently.

3.5. The Chair thanked the group for the feedback and stated that she co-chairs the partnership board to deliver on the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy with PCC Llywelyn and PCC Wools. She noted that there is huge frustration in relation to the level of domestic abuse and violence, so there is a need to emphasise that it is a preventative policy area but she agreed that there are clear responsibilities in Wales and feels that it may be beneficial to have a little refinement between Wales and the synergy with UK Government as PCC Llywelyn mentioned.

3.6. Dame Nia Griffith agreed and stated that she understands the context the document was written in as Policing in Wales are waiting to see how UK priorities on the Safer Streets Mission and Violence Against Women and Girls develop as these are two significant areas that UK Government are prioritising. She acknowledged it may be helpful to refer to the fact that Wales has carried out significant work in this area and taken the lead in many respects.

3.7. The Chair asked Paul Morris if this could be reflected within the document, adding that Welsh Government are delighted to be working in partnership with UK Government in a much more vigorous way.

Action: Paul Morris to amend the Forward Work Programme document, ensuring the feedback received is reflected in the document and to circulate the revised document.

4. Police Landscape Reform: Discussion and Reflections

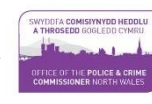
PCC Llywelyn opened the item by explaining there are multiple engagement events taking place in relation to Police Landscape Reform involving Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and Chief Constables (CCs) as well as individuals from other organisations such as HMICFRS and the College of Policing etc. He feels it is positive that Policing in Wales have been engaged throughout this process to date but he believes the phasing of this as it progresses into the engagement stage is important and what that may mean for policing before it is published as a White Paper.

He mentioned a specific session for Welsh PCCs in the future as well as a session on the local accountability element, focussing on the PCC model. He noted that with regards to factors such as Children and Young People and Youth Futures activity, there is some emphasis on Mayoral structures in the regions of England, therefore Welsh PCCs are trying to work through that understanding in terms of the way PCCs in Wales work. PCC Llywelyn stated that Policing in Wales are trying to emphasise that some of the infrastructure such as governance arrangements are already in existence in Wales such as the Safer Communities Network.

4.1. CC Blakeman noted that a lot of work is currently ongoing and that there is commitment from Ministers for a co-creation approach. She stated that Louisa Rolfe from the Metropolitan Police has been appointed as Senior Lead for NPCC and there have been conversations with her to ensure Wales is engaged with this in terms of understanding the differences, opportunities and the risks attached to that from a policing perspective. She emphasised there is a requirement for a clear plan to understand how policing progresses from the current system to a reformed place with the governance around this currently being established. There is a firm commitment from Welsh CCs to provide resource into the central team. She believes that the main reflection is that the system that policing is currently operating within was developed 60-70 years ago and whilst parts of this still work, there are ever evolving threats that policing faces in terms of criminality in addition to national and global threats. Landscape reform should allow Chiefs to be able to focus on local issues and Neighbourhood Policing whilst enabling policing to operate more effectively and efficiently.



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4.2. The Chair acknowledged the current position, noting that she recently met with CC Blakeman and CC Vaughan, as well as Welsh PCCs to understand where Welsh Government fit into this with regards to the way partnership has developed in Wales. She stated the need to ensure that stakeholders in Wales can understand and contribute as this provides a real opportunity to update and reform policing within Wales. She concluded that she hopes to share this discussion with Dame Diana Johnson MS when they meet in January 2025.

5a.) Budget Development 2025/26

PCC Llywelyn stated that the budget is currently in the forecasting stage; he commented he is hopeful that there will be an announcement of the settlement for policing the day after this meeting which will help to understand the position from an individual force perspective, adding he believes there will be a gap between what policing perceive is likely to be the settlement from the Home Office and force requirements. He noted the funding gap within Dyfed Powys Police is around £6.8m and gave the example of pay awards contributing to this, as Home Office would usually give an indication of what forces should be allocating towards pay increases. Next year's pay assumption was 2% but a recent announcement suggested it should be around 2.8% for next year, which could create a potential shortfall as it is currently unclear whether it is being funded. Therefore, depending on the settlement, Dyfed Powys Police are potentially looking at a precept level of around 10% or above depending on the settlement announcement which is difficult for communities.

5.a.1. PCC Wools agreed with PCC Llywelyn's points, adding that PCCs are also responsible for commissioning victims' services. PCCs have had details of the core Ministry of Justice grant which had to be reduced by around 4%, which placed PCCs in a challenging position with commissioning key services for victims. This includes victims of VAWDASV so they are trying to work out how to make the current grant stretch to support third sector providers in continuing to deliver services.

5.a.2. PCC Dunbobbin stated that North Wales Police are in a similar position to the other forces in Wales and that a great deal of work has taken place within the force to determine the level of precept that will be required but that they are also awaiting the announcement like other forces.

5.a.3. PCC Mudd agreed and highlighted that Gwent are in a similar position; she stated the importance of gaining certainty from the announcement, understanding that government departments are reviewing and reprofiling expenditure, but forces need that better understanding on how that impacts overall.

5.a.4. CC Blakeman reflected on the challenging discussions on budget setting that have taken place, noting that HMICFRS review all forces and often suggest various areas for improvement, with each of these having a range of costs attached to them such as additional staffing, additional audit or additional governance whilst also considering the pay award as mentioned by PCC Llywelyn. She added that local authorities in each force area have their own challenges and therefore are looking at which services they are able to reduce which forces haven't accounted for within their budgets. Forces are also trying to balance the difficult issue of capital investment as a significant amount of technology advancement is required as well as spending on estates and vehicles. This can mean that forces are in a challenging position in terms of trying to balance the books when going to Police and Crime Panels with a reasonable ask but it makes it difficult for forces to forward plan.

5.a.5. CC Lewis highlighted that during his tenure as Chief Constable, the nature of finance discussions has changed; he explained that 6 years ago the discussions would be around additional spend but that the conversation has now changed to discussing how to bridge the gaps created by UK Government funding announcements such as the Pay Award. He said it feels as if funding is approached from day to day spend as opposed to funding the extras and added that PCCs are being asked to supply funds that would have ordinarily been the responsibility of UK Government. However, CC Lewis stressed that great work is still being achieved across all forces in Wales despite the difficult budget settlements over the



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recent years, noting that Dyfed Powys Police cut crime by 18% last year, the largest reduction in England and Wales.

5.a.6. CC Vaughan echoed the comments of others, stating that funding reform is needed because forces aren't currently funded in a way that reflects current financial pressures as they are using an old funding formula. He added that policing remains an unprotected area of UK Government spend, so it is not protected during times of financial hardship and policing has no capital funding. He noted that the amount of oversight and accountability doesn't appear to reduce as the inspectorate will make a number of recommendations which are not costed, so forces are often having to reinvest in areas to respond to a number of recommendations causing additional financial pressures.

5c.) Welsh Government Budget Reflections

The Chair thanked everyone for their input and recognised the position forces are in and that they are awaiting clarity from UK Government. She noted that it was sobering to hear about the challenges from PCCs and CCs but that it is helpful to have Dame Nia Griffith in attendance in addition to the meeting with Dame Diana Johnson in January 2025. She invited Emma Watkins to reflect on the Welsh Government budget.

5.c.1. Emma Watkins stated that there is now a draft Welsh Government budget and commented that it is more positive than the one Welsh Government had over the last two years. She explained that the Welsh Government budget is now approximately £26bn, 80% of which comes from the Barnett Block Grant Funding via UK Government and the remaining 20% from devolved taxes. Through the budget, Welsh Government Ministers have been able to invest an additional £1.5bn in public services. She commented that based on the points raised in relation to the challenges around capital for policing, it was worth noting that Welsh Government have had more capital in the Welsh Government budget than they have had in previous years and this means that they are able to announce capital spending plans of over £3bn which she feels is significant, especially for public services. Every department within Welsh Government will benefit from an increase in revenue and capital funding. Although the budget is better than what was expected, the outlook for 2025/26 still remains challenging and Welsh Government are eagerly awaiting the UK Government Spending Review but Welsh Government Treasury are engaging with HM Treasury in relation to this.

5.c.2. The Chair thanked Emma Watkins for the comprehensive overview, stating that she believes the points raised will help with the partnership approach to delivering services at a local level in terms of devolved services. She noted it is positive that there is a draft budget that allows £1.5bn extra for public services and that there is a need to make it all work with policing in terms of prevention and early intervention.

5.c.3. PCC Llywelyn wanted to make a comment in relation to PCSO funding which is a direct support to forces to ensure there is a Neighbourhood Policing presence. This contribution is vital and acknowledged even though difficult discussions took place last year in relation to that budget line. He wanted to highlight that forces have a reduced number of PCSOs within communities but stated it is pleasing that there is an uplift in that quantum within the draft budget. He wanted to recognise that and thank Welsh Government for their continued support as he feels Neighbourhood Policing Teams in Wales would not be in the position they are in with having a physical presence in communities on a daily basis.

5.c.4. The Chair stated it is great to hear the work that is being carried out and feels this will feed into the community cohesion work offset out in the Welsh Government budget for public services and community safety. She acknowledged that policing is heading towards a challenging budget scenario but this appears to be a positive draft budget. She explained that the final budget will be published on 25th February 2025 alongside the final Local Government settlement. In terms of PCSOs, Welsh Government are still providing over £15m in 2025/26 which is more than forces in England have access to but Welsh Government have also identified £50,000 to put towards research work on the impact of PCSOs in



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Wales to demonstrate the benefits of the funding.

6. Road Safety Strategy in Wales and the GoSafe Casualty Reduction Partnership

PCC Llywelyn discussed the impact of Welsh Government decision making in relation to the 30mph and 20mph roads; he noted that this has had an impact on the financial position of the GoSafe partnership but the other element that policing are keen to see progress is the Welsh Government Strategy in relation to Road Safety. The previous strategy has expired and policing are keen to work alongside Welsh Government Officials to develop this as this would provide policing with a sense of strategic direction for the activity which GoSafe is a key element of. He added that a positive meeting took place with Ken Skates MS, the Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales in relation to the funding gap for GoSafe.

6.1. The Chair responded that she was glad that the meeting with Ken Skates went well and that she is aware that he allocated £3.6m to GoSafe for the current financial year, she noted work is being carried out with regards to the GoSafe partnership, ensuring there is police representation on the 20mph Steering Group as well as a dedicated officer within the Police Liaison Unit.

6.2. CC Blakeman agreed with the Chair's summary and noted that although a lot of work has been done on this, there is still much to do, but the ability to work with Welsh Government as the Road Safety Strategy develops will be vital for policing. She explained that T/ACC Dave Guiney has been tasked with a piece of work to bring together that project development and inform how the review is carried out to develop a more sustainable model moving forward.

6.3. Alison Thomas stated that Ken Skates MS was thankful and supportive of the work that has been carried out. She explained that there is a request for an additional £2.84m in revenue funding and £360,000 in capital funding to support the in year GoSafe position. The Cabinet Secretary committed to reviewing the in-year budget position to try and identify potential funding opportunities to bridge the gap. The longer-term challenges were also discussed in the meeting; Ken Skates MS suggested that an operational review of GoSafe is likely to take place to review any changes that may be required in order to make the funding solution more sustainable.

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

7.1. PCC Llywelyn advised that Policing in Wales would like to bring the matter of the Charter for Bereaved Families Through Public Tragedy to the attention of the Board. He explained that Policing in Wales are looking to be in a position to have a document signed at a Welsh level in Spring 2025. They would like to establish whether there may be an opportunity for the First Minister to sign it. He added that further details can be provided following the meeting.

7.2. CC Vaughan added that T/DCC Travis has done an exceptional job with regards to making sure that Bishop James Jones and the team who have been leading on these enquiries feel that Wales is more engaged in endorsing the charter. He feels it would be a great opportunity for Wales to sign up to this as a nation and is certain that others would follow their example. He is keen to ensure that work continues in relation to civil contingencies to ensure that this work is as strong as possible and is keen to not lose focus on how good Wales is at responding to major incidents and emergencies that affect communities.

7.3. CC Blakeman supported CC Vaughan's point and noted how well organisations in Wales work together with regards to issues such as Storm Darragh and gave the example of the current issues with Holyhead Port. There is growing tension and pressure in terms of traffic with HGVs so she stated she is keen to maintain good working relationships with each agency that has its own responsibilities.

7.4. The Chair commented that the relationship is such that they are able to engage on civil contingencies as and when required and agreed the importance of this. She added that in relation to the Charter for Bereaved Families Through Public Tragedy, more work needs to be carried out to bring this



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to the forefront as a really important matter to the Cabinet and the First Minister. Welsh Government are looking at the requirements of becoming a signatory of the Charter because the First Minister is supportive of the principles.

8. Minutes of the previous meeting (24/10/24)

The Chair confirmed that the notes were confirmed as accurate and it was noted that action 2 from the meeting on 24th October 2024 is ongoing.

9. Any Other Business

Mountain Rescue in Wales: Demand Pressures and Prevention Opportunities – CC Amanda Blakeman

CC Blakeman noted that North Wales Police are reporting unprecedented demand on the voluntary Mountain Rescue Services, having already exceeded the total for the previous financial year. There is pressure on the team that they aren't able to sustain so she met with the group and agreed that work was needed around prevention. She highlighted that they are a voluntary group so whilst the work has been supported by North Wales Police, she feels it would be useful to understand where Mountain Rescue responsibility sits within Welsh Government. This would allow a meaningful discussion to look at prevention predominantly but also to work with the volunteers to ensure it is sustainable for the future.

The Chair thanked CC Blakeman for raising this and advised she will take this point back across the various range of relevant portfolios such as Public Health and Environmental and Rural Affairs.

Action: Jane Hutt MS to raise the matter of increased demand on Mountain Rescue Services within Welsh Government.

Safer Streets Mission – UK Government Announcement – CC Jeremy Vaughan

CC Vaughan feels that the matter of the Safer Streets Mission has already been addressed under the agenda items but he wanted to add that the performance standards to be introduced are likely to be the first point that is launched. UK Government are currently working through what they consider to be performance indicators for initiatives such as the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee and halving VAWG. He feels there is a need to monitor this together because some of the measures under the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee may be cost cutting measures that will look at how forces work together with partners as well as how effective policing is as a single agency.

The Chair thanked CC Vaughan for raising this and agreed that it will need to be monitored together.

Date and time of next meeting

Wednesday 2nd April 2025 10:30-12:30