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**Gwent Police
and Crime Panel**

**Panel Heddlu
& Throseddu Gwent**

Am bob ymholiad sy'n ymwneud â'r agenda hon, cysylltwch Charlotte Evans
(Ffôn: 01443 864210 E-bost: evansca1@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Dyddiad: Dydd Gwener, 26 Chwefror 2021

Annwyl Syr/Fadam,

Cynhelir cyfarfod o **Banel Heddlu a Throseddu Gwent** yn **Cyfarfod digidol - Trwy 'Microsoft Teams'** ar **Dydd Gwener, 5ed Mawrth, 2021** am **10.00 am** (Cyn-gyfarfod y Panel am 9.30am) I ystyried y materion a gynhwysir yn yr agenda ganlynol.

A G E N D A

Tudalennau

- 1 Datganiadau o Ddiddordeb.
- 2 I dderbyn ymddiheuriadau am absenoldeb.

I gymeradwyo a llofnodi'r cofnodion canlynol:-

- | | | |
|---|--|---------|
| 3 | Cyfarfod Panel Heddlu a Throseddu Gwent a gynhaliwyd ar 29 Ionawr 2020 | 1 - 10 |
| 4 | Diweddariad Comisiynydd yr Heddlu a Throseddu Gwent – Mawrth 2021. | 11 - 16 |
| 5 | Adnabod Wynebau'n Awtomataidd – Cyflwyniad.. | |
| 6 | Aelodau Cyfetholedig Panel Heddlu a Throseddu Gwent | 17 - 18 |
| 7 | Blaenraglen Waith. | 19 - 20 |

AELODAETH:

Councillor Clive Meredith, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Cynghorydd Mrs Lisa Winnett, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Cynghorydd Mrs Christine Forehead, Caerphilly County Borough Council
Cynghorydd Gez Kirby, Caerphilly County Borough Council
Cynghorydd Colin Peter Mann, Caerphilly County Borough Council
Councillor Emma Rapier, Torfaen County Borough Council
Cynghorydd Peter Clarke, Monmouthshire County Borough Council
Cynghorydd Tony Easson, Monmouthshire County Council
Cynghorydd William Routley, Newport City Council
Cynghorydd Jason Jordan, Newport City Council
Councillor Mark Spencer, Newport City Council

Aelodau Cyfetholedig- Mrs G. Howells a Mr P. Nuttall

Drwy Wahoddiad

Mrs S. Curley, Office of the Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner
Mr D. Garwood-Pask, Office of the Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner
Mr J. Cuthbert, Office of the Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner
Ms E. Thomas, Office of the Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner

A Swyddogion Addas.

Gwent Police
and Crime Panel

Panel Heddlu
Gwent a Throseddu

GWENT POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

MINUTES OF THE REMOTE MEETING HELD VIA TEAMS ON FRIDAY 29TH JANUARY 2021 AT 10.00AM

Present:

Mrs G. Howells (Co-opted) – Chair
Councillor Colin Mann – Vice Chair

Councillor L. Winnett and C. Meredith - Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Councillor C. Forehead – Caerphilly County Borough Council
Councillors J. Jordan, W. Routley and M. Spencer - Newport County Borough Council
Councillor A. Easson – Monmouthshire County Borough Council
Mr P. Nuttall – Co-opted Member

By invitation:

Mr J. Cuthbert – Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent
Ms E. Thomas - Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent
Mrs S. Curley - Chief Executive, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent
Mr D. Garwood-Pask – Chief Finance Officer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent

Also in attendance:

Ms. P. Kelly – Chief Constable, Gwent Police
Ms J. Robinson – Head of Strategy, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent.
Mr R. Guest – Head of Communication and Engagement, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent.

Together with:

Mrs C. Forbes-Thompson (Scrutiny Manager - CCBC) and Ms C. Evans (Committee Services Officer - CCBC)

1. INTRODUCTION

The Chair opened the meeting and introductions were made.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr P. Nuttall declared an interest as the Chair of the Bridge to Cross Charity.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M. Jeremiah (Torfaen County Borough Council), E. Rapier (Torfaen County Borough Council), P. Clarke (Monmouthshire County Borough Council) and G. Kirby (Caerphilly County Borough Council)

4. GWENT POLICE AND CRIME PANEL MEETING HELD ON 11TH DECEMBER 2020

RESOLVED that, subject to the provision of costs for taser training as detailed on page 3 and the Force Management Statement being provided when available, as detailed on page 5, the minutes of the Gwent Police and Crime Panel meeting held on 11th December 2020 be approved as a correct record.

5. TO RECEIVE AND ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS TO THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR GWENT

To the Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner from the Chair of the Gwent Police and Crime Panel:

ASB and Homelessness

At a NAPFCP Conference at the end of last year, Olivia Pinkney, Chief Constable of Hampshire Police Force talked about the significant impact that Operation Luscombe was having on the ASB and Homeless in their area. They work with Southampton City Council to provide targeted support and enforcement to change the behaviour of prolific members of the street attached community who are committing crime and anti-social behaviour. Are you aware of this scheme and how it operates and does the work of Gwent Police in respect of ASB reflect any of the practice they are seeing the benefits of in Hampshire?

BREXIT

One of the complications for Policing as a result of Brexit Agreements is the impact on data sharing and access to European mechanisms and databases. How have you ensured the Chief Constable is prepared for the implications of such changes on the forces ability to investigate crimes which may require access to such information. "There have been a number of Gwent Police media posts during the last few weeks with regard to disciplinary actions over Officer Conduct. I would like the Commissioner to confirm what actions he has taken to gain assurance from the Chief Constable that Force managers are ensuring Officers and Staff are appropriately reminded of expected conduct and behaviour standards and that Managers are fully aware of their responsibility to identify and appropriately manage situations as they become aware of potential issues."

Response from the Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner:

The Chief Executive of the Office of the Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner, with the support of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent, explained that Gwent Police are aware of Operation Luscombe and that it has been adopted by several forces over the past 2-3 years. It focuses on support and engagement of partner agencies, working together to assess an individual's needs and look at solutions to get them onto the right track and steer them away from criminality.

It was noted that whilst Gwent Police have not adopted Operation Luscombe, they have adopted the principles and approach in their own development of appropriate strategies to support street homeless people and ASB and crime related issues. It was noted that Gwent Police do not criminalise any individuals for being street homeless but seek to engage individuals, alongside partner agencies such as Health, Local Authorities, Housing and Substance Misuse agencies in order to positively address issues from a person's homelessness. However, where there are persistent ASB or criminality occurring, this will be dealt with by action against the individual.

The Panel noted that most street-based homelessness occurs in Newport and therefore a working group has been set up, beneath the Community Safety Partnership called Safer Newport which provides focus and agrees actions in relation homelessness.

The Chief Executive explained that at the beginning of the Pandemic, activity enhanced due to concerns of infection amongst street homeless people and the risk to the public. Weekly

meetings were undertaken, and several houses were sourced in the area, with additional funding from Welsh Government and other agencies, as well as wrap around support provision. Where people refused support, more punitive action was taken to reduce the risk to the public.

The Panel were assured that work continues in this area and further funding has been received from Welsh Government to continue work with partner agencies to ensure that focus doesn't change as circumstances do.

In response to the question on Brexit, the Chief Executive explained that the UK left the EU on 31st January 2021 and whilst Forces have lost a number of the benefits of EU Membership such as the use of EU Policing and full access to Europol, the topic has been a fundamental agenda item for the Commissioner and Chief Constable for many years.

The Commissioner and Chief Constable were confident that all plans that could be in place have been implemented and are robust.

It was noted that Chief Superintendent Tom Harding, the Local Policing commander for the East is Gwent Police's lead for the EU exit arrangements and coordinates a response on the Chief Constables behalf, as well as links with the PCC office. It was noted that he is in touch with partners to ensure that Gwent Police are kept up to date on any new or developing risks.

It was noted that the Chief Executive has attended a virtual briefing with the Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Richard Martin who is the Head of International Crime Coordination Centre (ICCC), which was set up to prepare forces in England and Wales for EU Exit.

The Panel noted that Interpol licences have been procured for forces in good time and data has been moved between systems in readiness. In addition, training courses on the new systems have been rolled out at all levels of policing. Systems have been set up to help search for any foreign nationals in the Interpol system, which has been made available to all police officers, and Gwent Police Officers have the app available on their devices. The Panel were pleased to note that this works well and has not had a negative impact to date.

The Chief Executive explained that Gwent Police, along with other forces remain an associate member of Europol and should there be an urgent request, the Bureau can be contacted, and information provided in a timely manner.

Gwent Police are still involved in projects across Europe and remain part of a bid to develop a European wide property database, including the UK. It was reassuring that law enforcement continue to see UK forces as key partners and links have not been lost.

The Panel were assured that the Chief Constable remains comfortable that all appropriate plans remain in place and Gwent Police remain in a strong position, with the added benefit of the ICCC with assistance available where needed.

The Panel thanked the Commissioner and Chief Executive of the Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent for the responses, which were noted.

6. PCC VERBAL UPDATE OF THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 REGULATIONS AND RE-INTRODUCTION OF LOCKDOWN.

The Panel welcomed the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent who introduced the report.

The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner commended the Chief Constable, staff and Officers of Gwent Police for the exceptional work during the continued demand on day to day business as well as policing a pandemic. Gwent Police have continued to rise to the challenge and support partners such as Welsh Ambulance Services and South Wales Fire and Rescue and provide exceptional leadership and coordination.

The OPCC take part in National meetings and continue to ensure that the vaccination programme is the top priority, working with Welsh Government and Local Government, as well as partners of the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board to facilitate the programme.

The Panel were assured that the vaccine is vital for Gwent Police Officers, and will ensure Officer safety to undertake their work, however Officers will be vaccinated at the right time and in due course.

The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner was pleased to announce that the Home Office have now fully reimbursed the costs incurred as a result of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

It was noted that regular meetings are taking place with Police and Crime Commissioners across Wales, which has enabled Commissioner's to discuss an integrated crisis coordinated approach, which has resulted in an outstanding Police response in policing the pandemic.

The Panel noted that many staff, where possible, are working from home, and are fulfilling the role. This is regularly monitored in the daily Gold meetings, which are attended by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent and the Chief Constable. The meetings provide an opportunity to consider monitoring of the response to the Pandemic, strategic oversight, monitoring performance, action issued and capture learning and experience.

Discussions took place around the monitoring of sickness absence, which is undertaken by the Chief Constable. An internal Covid-Hub has been developed within Gwent Police, which offers a track and trace service, providing proactive support and enabling Officers to return to work as soon and as safely as possible. In addition, a support and wellbeing programme has also been set up within the hub.

The Panel noted that there have been low numbers of positive cases of Covid-19 within Gwent Police, which has been as a result of home working and protecting front line service staff.

The Panel welcomed the Chief Constable to the meeting who thanked the Deputy Commissioner for the summary of work and added that there has been some excellent feedback received as a result of press, social media and news response to the incident in Cwmbran. It has been a criticism in the past that Gwent Police do not share the good work they do, therefore the positive reports on the efforts of Gwent Police has resulted in an increase in public confidence.

There has been a real commitment of Gwent Police to maintain the health and wellbeing of staff, and as a result of good practice in the introduction of the Covid hub, PPE and home working, numbers of positive cases of Covid have reduced.

The Panel thanked the Deputy Police Commissioner and Chief Constable for the update and discussion ensued.

The Chair thanked the Deputy Commissioner and Chief Constable for the report and was saddened to see the house party footage and the clear demonstration of residents not abiding by the rules. However, thanked Gwent Police for their approach to tackling the issue.

A Panel Member wished to record the sterling work undertaken by the neighbourhood teams in policing the pandemic, and cases of anti-social behaviour of young people. Reports of issues have been explored and actioned where required.

Discussions took place around sickness and stress and a Panel Member sought assurances that staff wellbeing is looked after, and consideration given to the pressure Officers and staff are often subject to. The Chief Constable explained that she is passionate about staff wellbeing and therefore has developed a wellbeing strategy, which includes Mental Health and financial wellbeing, as well as the pressures of austerity. Officers deal with very difficult situations, such as deaths, murders, abuse and violence and must manage scenes, and therefore appropriate support is critical. The Panel were assured that there is a highly trained Occupational Health Team available to offer support and therefore wellbeing will remain a priority.

Concerns were raised by the Panel for traffic on the roads during this lockdown compared to the first lockdown and queried the number of breaches identified. The Chief Constable explained that Gwent Police are very proactive in responding to reports and stopping vehicles with 314 vehicles stopped during the previous weekend, 90% of which were compliant, however 111 fixed penalty notices were issued. There was a significant reduction in traffic on the roads during the first lockdown but there appears to be more work travel being undertaken and businesses encouraging staff to travel to work.

The Panel thanked the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for the update.

7. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR GWENT'S BUDGET REQUIREMENT AND COUNCIL TAX PRECEPT PROPOSAL 2021/22.

The Gwent Police and Crime Panel welcomed the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent who introduced the report, on behalf of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent.

The Panel were reminded of the previous meeting in December 2020 in which the Chief Constable provided the Panel with a compelling presentation on the Operational context and Requirements for the Finance Strategy 2021/22 – 2025/26 and detailed the reality of frontline policing in Gwent. It was noted that the scope of policing is vast and has a significant impact on everyone. The Chief Constables presentation served as a reminder of the ongoing mission statement to serve, protect and reassure the people of Gwent and the Commissioner is duty bound to ensure that the Chief Constable delivers on this.

The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent personally reassured the Panel that the proposal was thoroughly considered and scrutinised to ensure that the precept can meet the Chief Constables budget requirements and be affordable for the public of Gwent. The Strategic and Performance Board considered the proposal on 24th November 2020, prior to its consideration by the Panel in December, and the precept proposals have been thoroughly scrutinised, with comments incorporated from the three meetings of the Finance Sub-Group.

The Panel were asked to approve a precept increase of 5.49% for 2021/22 which equates to an additional £1.25 per month/ £15 per year for the average Band D Property. It was noted that this increase, when coupled with budget reductions and efficiencies of £812k would enable the delivery of a balanced budget as well as affordability. In the short-term it was noted that the increase will enable the Chief Constable to meet current and unforeseen demand and maintain the significant investment in new Police Officer posts for the next 2 years.

The Deputy Commissioner wished to express her sincere gratitude to the Communications and Engagement Unit, who conducted a public exercise under the challenges brought by the Pandemic, offering online surveys as well as opportunities for virtual face-to-face engagement and increased targeting for hard to reach communities. The exercise was undertaken over a 9-week basis and participants were asked "Would you support the principle of an increase in the Police element of the Council Tax Precept by £2 per month for 2021/22 to maintain Policing levels at the current levels'. Of the 1259 responses, 99% of which were verified as robust and appropriate, 54% supported the increase, 32.7% were not in support of the increase and 12.6% were unsure.

The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner referred to a number of policing pressures faced within Gwent, which included the levels of deprivation, in particular that Gwent has 3 of the top 10 deprived areas and 1 of the top 10 most deprived areas in Wales. Policing varies from inner city issues to rural crime and whilst Gwent Police is one of the smallest forces in England and Wales, both geographically and in respect of budget, the force polices organised crime, serious violence, terrorism and domestic extremism. In addition to the added pressures of the M4 and trunk roads across the county, which bring their own policing needs,

proximity to Cardiff and the resources for the new International Convention Centre at the Celtic Manor are also a key factor.

The Panel were asked to note that whilst the provisional settlement as received on 17th December 2020 provided an additional £4.2 million Central Government Funding, £1million of which will be released when the recruitment of 61 additional Officers has been undertaken. Furthermore, there has been an overall cash reduction in Central Government Grant funding since 2010 to date at around 12%, with the impact of inflation and pay awards, this equates to circa 25% reduction in Capital Grant Funding. In addition, the last 2 Comprehensive Spending Reviews have been delayed and instead converted to a 1-year spending round, which results in continued financial uncertainty for financial planning around public sector funding. Additional pressures were also noted such as the Local Government Pension Review, which has resulted in a flat cash £1.7million shortfall and a Capital Grant of £120k, with a cost of Fleet alone amounting to £1.4million, putting additional pressures on reserves, committed funds and external borrowing.

The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner presented the report, which is made in accordance with the Gwent Police and Crime Panel's statutory duty contained in Paragraph 3(2), Schedule 5 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

It was noted that the Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner notified the Panel on 22nd January 2021 of the proposed Police and Crime Budget and Precept for 2021/22.

The Panel considered a detailed report outlining the proposed precept for 2021/22 and a recommendation of 5.49% increase in the 2021/22 precept and a budget requirement of £147,856. The Panel debated the proposed increase and considered the impacts on the residents and communities of Gwent who are under increasing financial pressures due to the current pandemic.

The Panel acknowledged that the Commissioner has identified planned efficiency savings in 2021/22 of £676k and proposed utilisation of reserves and committed funds.

Panel members sought detail on the increase and challenges faced with combating cybercrime and whether the £70k cybercrime grant income was sufficient. The Panel were advised that the cost of dealing with cyber enabled crime is a significant amount and that the grant has very little impact on covering the actual costs incurred.

The Panel asked if the surplus budget achieved in 2020/21 (achieved due to the impact of Covid-19 and alternative ways of working, such as less external training, office and stationery costs) was considered when drafting the budget need for 2021/22. Panel members were advised that this was taken into account and where it is certain these savings will reoccur; they have been removed from the budget. However, some are less certain and will need to be monitored for the 2021/22 year to see if the budget can be permanently reduced and reports will be available during the year for the Panel to monitor.

The Panel sought assurance that the expected savings from Procurement over the next 5 years of £200k per annum are achievable given potential disruption and price changes due to Brexit and whether the reduction for demand for some items under procurement contracts, due to Covid restrictions, have been factored into the savings. Members were informed that the Gwent OPCC were involved with the joint strategic procurement arrangements across Wales and the National arrangements to procure significant requirements such as vehicles. Potential savings are calculated through these purchasing mechanisms and factored into the estimated budget savings. It was suggested that the Panel finance sub-group monitor this during the year ahead.

Panel Members sought clarification of the Band D council tax equivalence across Gwent, and the increase proposed for 2021/22 when compared to 2020/21, and it was explained that it is the same amount across all 5 local authority areas.

The Panel enquired how Gwent Police Force receives remuneration from other Force area where they have been asked to provide support to police large events. It was explained that 'Mutual Aid' is a long-standing arrangement across England and Wales, whereby assistance is provided for both planned and unplanned events. The Panel were assured that Gwent Police are reimbursed where officers provide support to other Forces. The report refers to the consequential impacts upon Gwent because its neighbours Cardiff, (Which often holds large events) with traffic using the route through Gwent to travel to the venues. The position of Cardiff which is considered to be the same as other Forces, despite its status as a capital city and host to many international events, has been raised on a number of occasions with the Home Office.

Panel members sought clarification on the £1m set aside previously to deal with potential demands arising from the previously proposed M4 relief road and if that money has now been allocated elsewhere. The Panel informed that the £1m has been transferred to Revenue contribution to Capital. This will mean that there is no need to borrow thereby saving £80k in interest and costs. However, if the £1m is needed in the future it can be switched back but then the need to borrow would have to be considered. The Panel were reminded that the Capital grant is only £120k but there is a need for £15m, sources from Capital are either Capital receipts (Gwent has few to sell) or reserves and committed funds but these are finite and have reduced in the last few years to ¼.

The Panel asked for more detail on how much of reserves are committed and were advised that there are £33m in Reserves and Committed funds. This includes the £5m legally required for the Operational Reserve. The remaining £28m is required for several purposes, a large amount is to deliver the Capital programme, which is the HQ and the Hub and Spoke Estates model. A smaller amount is needed to manage potential budget deficit and ICT. The budget is also used to pump prime 'invest to save' projects which aims to reduce future budget requirements. If reserves were used to reduce the budget precept requirements this is a one off but will have an ongoing budget impact. An example of a 5% precept was given which would reduce the precept by £300k but this would then impact on the MTFP over the next 5 years by £1.5m. The Panel were advised that it is better to use the reserve to invest in recurrent savings and reduce future precepts.

Following a detailed discussion with the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, Chief Constable and the Chief Finance Officer, the Panel considered the Commissioners proposal to a 5.49% increase in the policing precept.

The Panel wishes to place on record their thanks to Mr Darren Garwood-Pask, Chief Finance Officer, for engaging the Finance Sub-Committee and Panel in early discussions about the Commissioner's Medium-Term Financial Plan and the detailed budget and precept report, also for his detailed and comprehensive answers.

Following a full debate about the proposed Precept, Gwent Police and Crime Panel unanimously made the following recommendation to the Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner.

RESOLVED that the Panel would not veto the proposed precept proposal of 5.49% for 2021/22 however the Panel would like the Police and Crime Commissioner to review the budget proposal to look for any additional savings which would be achieved whilst retaining existing and planned extra frontline staff.

8. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSONER FOR GWENT PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 2 2020/21.

The report provided an overview of the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) oversight and scrutiny of Gwent Police performance in relation to the Police and Crime Plan. The report

was for quarter 2 of the financial year 2020/21. Where possible the report included data from April 2017 to correspond with the Police and Crime Plan delivery period and enabled a wider view of the PCC's delivery against the Police and Crime Plan.

It was noted that the scrutiny and monitoring of force performance takes place in a variety of forms, including observation and participation in boards and meetings as a critical friend. The main forum where this takes place is the Strategy and Performance Board, the meeting at which the PCC holds the Chief Constable (CC) to account and is open to the public. There are also specific reports and briefings requested as required. The PCC has weekly one-to-one meetings with the CC to discuss matters arising and any areas of particular concern. The PCC has made it very clear to the CC that his expectation is that he is provided with good quality information, so he can understand performance and undertake effective scrutiny and monitoring. This is specifically to include: Consistent data sets, baseline and actual data for all the force indicators; Narrative to describe activity relating to all force indicators and Police and Crime Plan measures; Analysis of impact for all activity; and 4. Future planning.

In relation to data conventions it was noted that most data and tables contained within the report take into account quarterly figures for the previous two financial years, broken down further to an average two-year quarterly figure. This two-year quarterly average figure can be analysed against quarter 2 2020/21 data, allowing a comparison against a two-year average that will consider seasonal fluctuations and one off 'spike' anomalies. In addition, the quarter 2 2020/21 data can be compared to quarter 2 figures for years 2019/20 to provide a seasonal like-for-like comparison. This is Gwent's agreed performance analysis standard and is aimed at smoothing out long-term changes and counteracting overemphasis of annual percentage changes when previously comparing just two set data points in time.

It was noted that there were changes to the recording standards of several crime types in March 2017, meaning that unfortunately it is not practical to compare any quarterly data prior to this date as it would compromise the validity of direct comparisons between any later periods.

The Officer explained that whilst incidents have increased to last year, they are still lower in comparison to the quarterly average. Antisocial Behaviour however remains high, with the Covid-19 pandemic increasing these numbers.

The Commissioner was concerned with the lower numbers of reported Domestic Abuse incidents, and work is underway to reach out to victims and reinforce the message that they can leave their situation even under lockdown restrictions for their safety. It is hoped that the White Ribbon Campaign will reinforce the message.

Discussions took place around Cyber Crime and the Commissioners Office reassured the Panel that they will continue to improve how this data is presented.

In relation to Victim Support, it was noted that there is a backlog in the support provision as a result of the ongoing Pandemic, however, the OPCC are working well with Partners to deal with the backlog and provide the much-needed support to victims. The Panel were also asked to note that more information will be made available in the new financial year in relation to the Victims Hub and the further work around the Safety Hubs and work around missing persons and children.

The Panel noted that in relation to Hate Crime, the increase in reported incidents has remained the same, and work is underway to encourage people to come forward, report incidents.

The Panel thanked the Officer for the report and discussion ensued.

A query was raised in relation to the 20% increase in Bike Crime, however the data appears lower than in the previous year. The Officer explained that this is regularly monitored but a

change has been noted and often these crimes are driven by substance misuse. There has been a short-term increase at quarter 4, which dipped in quarter 3, but has not maintained an overall trend.

A Panel Member raised queries in relation to repeat offenders and in particular the implication of the delays in Court hearings, and potential for them to continue offending during this time. The Officer explained that whilst the pandemic has had an impact on the Court cases being heard, there are deterrents in place, such as bail conditions, monitoring and diversion schemes which aim to reduce the risk of repeat offending. In addition, it was noted that a new pilot scheme called Revolving Door is being implemented which aims to address and recognise repeat offenders, the reasons for the repeat offending and look at appropriate interventions to mitigate repeat offences.

Discussions took place around the abandoned call rate for the 101 service and it was noted that a new system has been implemented in which waiting times for a response are clearly stated to the caller, which has reduced the number of abandoned calls.

The Panel thanked the Officer for the report and noted the content.

9. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Mrs Forbes-Thompson, Lead Officer for the Panel provided the Committee with an overview of the Forward Work Programme.

It was noted that the next meeting, scheduled for 5th March 2021 and will consider the PCC update and Automatic Facial Recognition Presentation.

The Following meeting has been scheduled for 2nd July 2021 and will consider the Annual Performance Report.

Members requested an update on the Estate. Officers explained that the Estate Group is due to meet next week, and discussions will take place on how to engage. The Panel noted that they will be provided with an update in due course.

The Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent thanked the Panel Members for their messages and kind wishes and looked forward to getting better and thanked the Panel for their support.

The Panel wished the Commissioner a speedy recovery and thanks Officers and staff at the Office of the Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner and Gwent Police for their continued commitment and dedication during the pandemic.

Meeting Closed at 13.19pm.

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Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent's Update March 2021

This is a selection of activities undertaken, scrutinised or supported by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) from December 2020 to February 2021.

COVID-19 IMPLICATIONS

At the time of writing, Wales is at Alert Level 4. Prior to this, Welsh Government announced a national lockdown beginning on 19 December, which resulted in significant challenges for policing. Throughout this period, my office has continued to attend the daily Gold group that Gwent Police has run since March 2020. All of the support and scrutiny of Gwent Police that my office and I have undertaken during this time reassures me that the force's response to the challenges has been proportionate, effective and, in many instances, commendable. The OPCC staff continue to work from home, in line with Welsh Government guidelines.

I have also joined with the Police and Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables across Wales to call on the UK and Welsh Governments to start prioritising policing for vaccinations alongside other front-line emergency services and care workers. While I strongly agree that it is important for the most vulnerable in our communities to be protected as a priority, it is now essential that police officers and front-line staff are vaccinated as soon as possible. These conversations are on-going, but I am pleased that police medics, which include custody staff, Area Support Unit officers and all armed officers, are now being included under the definition of frontline health workers and have started to receive their vaccinations.

I would like to thank all Gwent Police officers and staff, my own team at the OPCC, and our partner organisations for their hard work and dedication to serving the people of Gwent throughout this difficult period.

PRIORITY 1 – CRIME PREVENTION

1.1 Cyber crime

We have worked with Gwent Police's Cyber Crime Team as it rolled out online safety training to more than 70 police cadets. The young people were taught how to recognise online threats and modify their own behaviour to avoid online scams. Many of the crimes recorded by Gwent Police now have an online element, so it is crucial that we start education around online safety as early as possible to ensure people know how to keep themselves safe. We have continued to speak with residents about these issues and promoted advice to groups who are at risk.

1.2 Retail staff

I joined Chief Superintendent Tom Harding of Gwent Police to listen to the voices of retail workers from across Wales as part of National Respect for Shopworkers Week. The discussion, hosted by the shopworkers' trade union USDAW and community retailer Co-op, centred around incidents during lockdown. USDAW's latest survey

showed that 75 per cent of retail staff have seen an increase in abuse during the coronavirus crisis. I heard how retail staff face daily fear of abuse, theft and attack, and I was appalled and disgusted to hear about incidents in Wales where staff have been spat at. I am working with Gwent Police and USDAW to campaign for no tolerance for abuse against shopworkers, and for people to report these incidents to the police.

1.3 Support services for women and young people

Deputy First Minister Jane Hutt and Victims' Commissioner Dame Vera Baird have praised two services that are helping offenders to break cycles of criminality and improve their lives. The Women's Pathfinder Whole System Approach and 18–25 Early Intervention Service are jointly commissioned by my office and South Wales OPCC. They provide targeted support to women and young people, supporting them with issues such as alcohol and substance misuse, mental health problems, and improving family relationships. The services work to divert people from criminality and re-offending by creating a support network and helping them live safer, healthier lives. They are shining examples of effective collaboration between public, private and third sector organisations supporting some of the most vulnerable people in our society. Almost 2,000 people have been supported since October 2019.

PRIORITY 2 – SUPPORTING VICTIMS

2.1 Safeguarding hubs

Safeguarding hubs that help vulnerable adults and children access the services they need to keep them safe have launched across Gwent. Each county in Gwent has its own hub that allows police and partners to work more closely together and to offer targeted, early intervention in our communities. This provides a more efficient and effective service and ensures that the right help is available to those who need it most. The launch of the new hubs in January follows successful pilots in Blaenau Gwent and Newport as part of the Early Action Together programme. Since May 2019, more than 1,400 children in Newport and 227 children in Blaenau Gwent have benefited from the early intervention projects, which have improved:

- Early information sharing;
- Timely decision making;
- The quality of PPN referrals;
- The integrated service responses to children and families;
- Timeliness of referral pathways to early intervention projects; and
- Effectiveness of support and interventions offered.

2.2 Victim support services

We continue to have a strong expectation that there has been an increase in domestic abuse due to lockdowns. We know this is always under reported to the police. We are continuing to support Welsh Government, Gwent Police and local partners to raise awareness of this issue and support services. Gwent Police continue to review cases of known vulnerable and high-risk victims where reports are not being made and work with partners to find the safest and most appropriate ways

to provide support. The UK Government has announced a £40million funding boost for services that support victims of rape and domestic abuse. This amounts to more than £139,000 for Gwent. We have been warning the UK Government about the pressures that victim support services are facing during lockdown for some time and I am pleased that they are listening to our concerns and those of our partners. To help increase awareness of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, training has also been offered to all members of the OPCC.

2.3 Victims' Commissioner

I have publicly backed the Victims' Commissioner's call for UK Government to introduce laws to give victims more rights about how they are treated during their criminal justice journey. Supporting victims is one of my key priorities and I am proud that we are making great strides to ensure that we deliver a better service for victims. Gwent Police was the first force in Wales to bring a wide range of victims support services under one roof with Connect Gwent, ensuring that all victims and witnesses to crime in Gwent are offered support. In 2019 we worked with Gwent Police to establish a Victims' Board to scrutinise the delivery of services for victims and witnesses, ensuring that they are consistent and good quality. We are committed to continual improvement and the business plan for further investment in these services has been agreed.

2.4 White Ribbon Day

The annual White Ribbon Day walk was replaced this year with the #149Challenge due to Covid-19 restrictions. The challenge ran until 10 December. The awareness campaign was successful in its aims, particularly on Twitter (the primary channel), with 3.2million potential impressions and a potential reach of 489,500. In total, it generated 990 tweets from 240 contributors. There were 1,347 engagements with Twitter content on the OPCC account, including 101 retweets and 280 likes. On secondary channels, almost 50,000 were reached by the OPCC Facebook page, while 12,000 people were engaged via Instagram. White Ribbon Day was covered on ITV Wales at Six, with an interview with the Deputy Chief Constable Amanda Blakeman, who also undertook her own #149Challenge, as did the Chief Constable. Gwent Police shared information about White Ribbon Day on 25 November via all channels and reached an additional 344,916 people. A key aim of the campaign was to utilise partner channels. Key partner statistics include Gwent Dragons Rugby (250k potential impressions), Caerphilly County Borough Council (549k potential impressions) and Newport County Football (68k potential impressions). Newport County also wore White Ribbon t-shirts during their warmup against Walsall FC and all directors and managers of the club wore White Ribbons. Information was also published in the local media, four local authority websites and Gwent Dragons website. Sport Caerphilly was also very proactive, encouraging sports clubs across Caerphilly to take part in daily #149Challenges during the 16 days of action. I would like to thank everyone who took part in this virtual challenge this year and would like to further reinforce the Chief Constable's and my commitment to raising awareness of all types of abuse and encouraging people to access support services.

PRIORITY 3 – COMMUNITY COHESION

3.1 Black Lives Matter launch

My office attended the virtual launch of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) manifesto in December, along with other representatives of the other Welsh OPCCs and police forces. Discussions focused on inclusion, and opportunities and rights for black people in Wales. Policing in Wales has supported the work of BLM's regional leaders and is committed to opening the lines of communication to ensure that we police all of our communities in a fair, open and transparent way. A key item for discussion was stop and search, and commitments were made to ensure that it is used proportionately and appropriately at all times.

3.2 Community dial-ins

We have continued to take part in the weekly community dial-ins that Gwent Police has run since the first Covid-19 lockdown in March. They continue to be a good opportunity for me to receive a wide range of views from residents and organisations that work with people with protected characteristics. The dial-ins are helping to foster relations and strengthen engagement between communities, the force and my office. I use information from these meetings to help me hold the Chief Constable to account and to assist my office in working with Gwent Police to develop our services to meet the needs of all our communities.

3.3 Community engagement

My office is taking part in regular calls with Gwent's black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities to hear their experiences of policing in Gwent. This forum is organised by Gwent Police and is giving us an opportunity to speak directly to our BAME communities. In February, we had some open and honest discussions about their relationships with the police and I have reinforced my clear commitment to strengthening the relationship between the police and our BAME communities through this and our ongoing community engagement work. We are also undertaking practical measures such as training for staff, targeted recruitment to help ensure Gwent Police better reflects our communities and working with partners through the Public Service Boards to address local issues. Importantly, it is also about ensuring that our doors are always open to listen to the concerns of the community.

3.4 Strategic Equality Plan

In December we published our Joint Strategic Equality Plan for 2020–2024 in partnership with Gwent Police. The plan was completed following a public engagement exercise with residents across Gwent and embeds the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion into all work undertaken by my office and Gwent Police. It aims to challenge discrimination and links to my Police and Crime Plan for Gwent, which sets out local policing priorities.

PRIORITY 4 – TACKLING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

4.1 Positive Futures

Throughout December, selection boxes were delivered to referrals by the Newport Positive Futures team as a reward for their engagement and interaction through such

a difficult time. Food hampers were also purchased and put together by Positive Futures ambassadors Leon Brown and Ashton Hewitt. Community engagement was held in the first two weeks of December, with more than 100 attendees across Newport. Doorstep welfare visits for one-to-one referrals in Newport restarted in January. After risk assessments, Covid-19 checks and mapped routes, staff have visited referrals once a week to check in, see how they are, and set challenges and goals for them. Torfaen and Caerphilly teams have worked closely with Gwent Police to go on outreach to keep educating groups of young people who have been congregating and ignoring Covid-19 guidance. Newport and Torfaen young people have also received activity packs to help keep them active and diverted from issues. These have been gratefully received by about 50 families.

PRIORITY 5 – EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY

5.1 Children’s Charter

My office has become the first OPCC in Wales to be awarded the Children and Young People's Participation Standards Charter. We have pledged a commitment to work toward the seven National Participation Standards when engaging and working with children and young people. The standards aim to help organisations put children and young people at the centre of their work when shaping processes, plans and projects. The signing of the charter is the first step in achieving the National Participation Standards Kitemark award, which will assess how well my office engages, listens and feeds back information. One of the events that will help us achieve this is our annual Youth Question Time event in March. I have every confidence Kitemark will be achieved in the next two years.

5.2 Commissioning

There has been a large amount of contract and grant management activity. All funded organisations were required to submit mid-year reports on their performance and finances. These reports are currently being reviewed by my office and Gwent Police. Quarter three review meetings have been held with key organisations to discuss performance of their services. It is clear that commissioned services have worked exceptionally hard to overcome the significant barriers and challenges presented by Covid-19 and the ever-changing government guidance. While it has been a difficult time, for many it has also been a period of reflection and learning, with some changes here to stay because of the benefits identified for staff and service users. A recent example of a funded project's work is Cymru Creations working with children from Blaenau Gwent to create a short film that warns adults about the dangers of drink driving. They scripted, directed, recorded and edited the film, using comedy to deliver serious road safety messages. Although filming was done before lockdown, the editing was completed remotely, helping to engage the children and give them focus while at home.

The award process for the 2021/22 PCC Police Community Fund was completed in February. All applications went through a robust review process, with announcements expected to be made about the successful applicants in the coming weeks. My office is also submitting returns to the MOJ on the expenditure of funding, including the MOJ Victims Support Services Grant, additional ISVA funding and

Covid-19 extraordinary funding. We are currently assessing the need and allocating the domestic abuse and sexual violence funding uplift to ensure that this funding is distributed where it is needed most.

5.3 Crime statistics

The latest crime figures from the Office for National Statistics again show that Gwent has one of the lowest levels of recorded crime in the UK. I continue to be reassured that this reflects the dedication and determination by Gwent Police to protect our communities, despite the significant challenges faced on a daily basis by policing. However, we are concerned that crimes such as sexual violence and domestic abuse are going unreported. Victims may be trapped at home with their abusers, or afraid that they will be in trouble for breaking Covid restrictions if they come forward. My office continues to proactively support the regional Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) partnership to target those who may need support and encourage them to speak out.

5.4 Financial briefing

My team joined Chief Constable Pam Kelly for a briefing with Gwent's Members of Parliament and Members of the Senedd. As well as an update on operational policing, they were briefed on the difficult financial future that Gwent Police faces in the coming years. Despite recent investment from the UK Government in extra officers and equipment, Gwent Police has had significant cuts in Government funding since 2010. It has had to make almost £50million in savings and must save a further £5million by 2024.

5.5 New officers and operating model

During January, we welcomed 28 new Police Officers and 36 new Police Community Support Officers into Gwent Police. These new officers are dedicated to protecting and serving our communities and they will be a welcome addition to Gwent Police at a crucial time. These officers mean there are now around 200 more frontline officers than in 2016. We have also been working closely with Gwent Police to review its operating model. Implementation of the new model began in February and will ensure that resources are best placed to meet the challenges facing policing now and in the foreseeable future. The new way of working puts crime prevention, victims, problem solving, safeguarding, and continuous improvement at the centre of everything we do. This is firmly in line with the priorities in my Police and Crime Plan. The new operating model sees more dedicated resources for neighbourhood policing, a new approach to integrated offender management, more victim care officers, more intelligence officers to better support frontline policing, a new crime prevention initiative 'We Don't Buy Crime', additional investment in the Criminal Investigation Department, and a new roads policing and specialist operations unit. A presentation on the model will be made to panel members later this year.

SUBJECT: GWENT POLICE AND CRIME PANEL CO-OPTED MEMBERS

DATE: 5TH MARCH 2021

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the process for appointment of the two co-opted members to serve on the Gwent Police and Crime Panel. To appoint the three Panel members to sit on the interview panel.

2. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 2.1 The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 requires the establishment of a Police and Crime Panel (PCP) within each police force area to support and challenge the local Police and Crime Commissioner.

3. REPORT

- 3.1 A Police and Crime Panel is required to appoint a minimum of 2 Co-opted Members but can resolve to appoint more, subject to the subsequent approval of the Home Secretary.
- 3.2 The appointment of independent co-optees provides an opportunity to readjust the experience, knowledge and skills available across the membership of a police and crime panel. By carefully selecting individuals that complement the councillors nominated to the panel, independent co-optees can be used to fill experience, knowledge and skills gaps to help make the panel more effective.
- 3.4 The Gwent Police and Crime Panel Arrangements set out the appointment of co-opted members and state that Co-opted Members term of office shall be until 31st October of the same year as the next ordinary Police and Crime Commissioner election. The positions must be re-advertised, however, this does not restrict Co-opted Members from reapplying or being re-appointed to the position.
- 3.5 The Panel Arrangements state that the Chair and Vice Chair of the Panel and another Member of the Panel (the interview panel) supported by the Lead Officer to the Panel, will interview those shortlisted. However in this instance, the current chair is a co-opted member. Therefore the interview panel will need to comprise of the Vice- Chair and two other Panel Members.
- 3.6 Following the interviews, a report with the recommendations of the three Panel Members will be considered by the Gwent Police and Crime Panel, hopefully at the September meeting. If approved the nominated co-opted members will be submitted to the Home Office for approval.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The cost of the advertisement of the co-opted positions will also be met from the Police and Crime Panel grant.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Consultation has taken place as outlined below and any comments received have been

reflected in this report.

7. RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 The Gwent Police and Crime Panel are asked to note this report and
- 7.2 To appoint two Panel members to sit on the Interview Panel with the Vice Chair of Gwent Police and Crime Panel.

8. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 To comply with the Police and Crime Panel's statutory membership requirements.

9. STATUTORY POWERS

- 9.1 Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

Author: Catherine Forbes-Thompson, Lead Officer to Gwent Police and Crime Panel
Email: forbecl@caerphilly.gov.uk
Telephone: 01443 864279

Consultees: Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services
Lisa Lane, Head of Democratic Services

Background Papers - Gwent Police and Crime Panel Arrangements <https://www.gwentpcp.org.uk/the-panel/panel-arrangements/>

GWENT POLICE AND CRIME PANEL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2021

5th March 2021

- PCC Update
- Automatic Facial Recognition
- Gwent Police and Crime Panel Co-Opted Members.

2nd July 2021

- PCC Update
- Performance Framework
- Annual Report
- Roads Safety

Date to Be Confirmed –

Cyber Crime

Serious and Organised Crime

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