



National Policing Board Minutes 6 May 2020

Title of meeting	National Policing Board
Date	6 May 2020
Time	10:00-11:30
Venue	Virtual meeting via videoconference
Chair	Rt Hon Priti Patel MP: Home Secretary

Attendees

- Rt Hon Priti Patel MP: Home Secretary (Chair)
- Kit Malthouse MP: Minister of State for Crime and Policing
- Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP: Minister of State for Security
- Victoria Atkins MP: Minister for Safeguarding
- Dame Cressida Dick DBE QPM: Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service
- Martin Hewitt QPM: Chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC)
- Katy Bourne OBE: Chair, Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC)
- Lynne Owens CBE QPM: Director General, National Crime Agency (NCA)
- Mike Cunningham QPM: Chief Executive Officer of the College of Policing
- Sir Thomas Winsor: HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary & HM Chief Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)
- Neil Basu QPM: Head of UK Counter Terrorism Policing
- Matthew Rycroft CBE: Permanent Secretary
- Patricia Hayes: Director General, Crime, Policing and Fire Group
- Julia Kinniburgh: Director General, Serious and Organised Crime Group
- Rachel Watson: Policing Director, Crime, Policing and Fire Group
- Dan Greaves: Crime Director, Crime, Policing and Fire Group
- Paul Dean CBE: Deputy Director, Oversight and Response, Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism – for Tom Hurd: Director General, Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism

Special invitees

- John Apter: National Chair, Police Federation of England and Wales
- Chief Constable Simon Bailey QPM: NPCC lead for Violence and Public Protection
- Paul Griffiths: President of the Police Superintendents' Association
- Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Julia Mulligan: APCC Joint Victims Lead
- Deputy Chief Constable Louisa Rolfe OBE: NPCC lead for Domestic Abuse

Welcome and Introduction

1. **RT HON PRITI PATEL MP, HOME SECRETARY** welcomed members, noted the exceptional circumstances of the meeting and thanked attendees for joining virtually. She extended her thanks to the policing leadership, police officers and staff for their phenomenal work to tackle the challenges presented by the COVID-19 response and noted that policing had played a pivotal role in keeping the country safe, protecting the NHS and stopping the spread of the disease.

Actions from the previous meeting

2. **THE HOME SECRETARY** provided the Board the opportunity to comment on actions recorded from the previous meeting, none were made.

Police Uplift Programme

3. **THE HOME SECRETARY** invited **KIT MALTHOUSE MP, MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME AND POLICING** to introduce the item. He welcomed the announcement of 3,005 additional police officers since the recruitment programme began and thanked the NPCC, the College of Policing and Home Office officials. The Minister acknowledged the need to address allocations for recruitment in Years 2 and 3, and told the board that further discussion, including with Her Majesty's Treasury, would take place to provide certainty to forces and agencies.
4. **PATRICIA HAYES, DIRECTOR GENERAL, CRIME, POLICING AND FIRE GROUP** remarked on the achievements of the programme and the launch of the new recruitment website. She noted that force modelling data had helped the rollout of the College's virtual assessment centre and that work was underway to target the delivery of candidates to forces that required them most. Further work would be carried out to ensure new recruits had the kit they require to be deployed as soon as possible. An ambition to learn from what has happened during the COVID-19 period on recruitment was heard to be a priority for the programme.
5. **MIKE CUNNINGHAM QPM, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE COLLEGE OF POLICING** updated the board on the development of a new virtual assessment centre established as a result of COVID-19. This was currently being trialed by two police forces and would be evaluated by the end of December. This would aim to ensure standards were not compromised and would identify the impact on the diversity of recruits, best practice for online assessments and where face-to-face processes should be resumed. The board heard that online assessments would continue until December 2020 to provide certainty to candidates.

6. **MARTIN HEWITT QPM, CHAIR OF THE NATIONAL POLICE CHIEFS' COUNCIL**, thanked the College, police forces and Home Office officials for the collaborative working practices that had been established during the COVID-19 response and higher education institutions for their role in the delivery of training. He also reported that more work would be done to encourage a diverse range of new recruits and in discussion the board heard that HMICFRS Force Management Statements may be used to help forces identify skills gaps that needed to be filled.
7. **THE HOME SECRETARY** concluded the item by reaffirming her thanks to the College and the NPCC, acknowledged that it had been a challenging period and commended forces for their strong leadership.

Hidden Crimes; Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Domestic Abuse

8. **THE HOME SECRETARY** introduced the item and stated that a significant amount of work had been undertaken by police forces and the NCA to tackle hidden crimes during COVID-19. She highlighted the recent introduction of the Domestic Abuse Bill and noted the campaigns, initiatives and investments to promote awareness and protect the most vulnerable.
9. **RT HON JAMES BROKESHIRE MP, MINISTER OF STATE FOR SECURITY** thanked partners across the sector for continued collaborative working. The Minister warned that vulnerable people had not been identifying themselves in the normal ways and further work was required with other Government departments and charitable partners to ensure readiness for the emerging picture when lockdown is eased. He emphasised the need to continue to build on the existing work in order to be prepared for the recovery phase, both in policing and the criminal justice system.
10. **VICTORIA ATKINS MP, MINISTER FOR SAFEGUARDING**, remarked on the disparity between the increase in calls made to domestic abuse charities and the number of reports to police, which had not significantly increased. The Minister confirmed that preparation was underway to prepare for a surge in demand for accommodation and community-based services. She urged police forces to continue to assist the NPCC with their data collection and thanked policing partners for their role in promoting media messaging on domestic abuse, emphasising that even during lockdown people in abusive relationships should still seek support. The Minister also noted the additional £9.28m of new funding to support vulnerable partners in the charity sector and a further £2m funding to immediately bolster domestic abuse helplines and online support.
11. **KATY BOURNE OBE, CHAIR OF THE ASSOCIATION OF POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS** and **POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER JULIA MULLIGAN, APCC JOINT VICTIMS LEAD**, reported that a number of police forces

would carry out a deep dive on data to get a clear picture on the discrepancies between reporting to charities and the police.

12. DEPUTY CHIEF CONSTABLE LOUISA ROLFE OBE, NPCC LEAD FOR DOMESTIC ABUSE, reported on the work by forces to maintain services to victims. She confirmed that the NPCC had been working with the College to produce best practice guidance and will ensure that the innovative work on perpetrator behaviours would be underpinned by robust academic evaluation. DCC Rolfe reported that forces had carried out home visits to perpetrators and those with live domestic violence protection orders and that joined up working with the Department for Health and Social Care was underway to flag medical appointments suspected as resultant from abuse to the police.

13. CHIEF CONSTABLE SIMON BAILEY QPM: NPCC LEAD FOR VIOLENCE AND PUBLIC PROTECTION stated that the Pursue strand of work was reporting its highest number of arrests per month during COVID-19. He remarked that more needed to be done to encourage technology companies to prevent criminals uploading illegal material and praised the Home Office Child Image Abuse database in identifying victims and offenders as well as preventing officers from having to view indecent imagery. He said that the COVID-19 response had necessitated increased cross-Whitehall and agency working between the NPCC, Home Office, charitable partners and other Government departments, such as the Department for Education, which had produced positive results.

14. LYNNE OWENS CBE QPM, DIRECTOR GENERAL, NATIONAL CRIME AGENCY, reported that the NCA had increased covert activity and had identified a large number of high harm offenders. She highlighted work the NCA had undertaken to prevent travelling sex offenders entering the country and updated the board on an overseas operation that had shut down an online child sex abuse livestream, that was being accessed in the UK.

15. THE HOME SECRETARY stated that member organisations had carried out essential work during the period of COVID-19 and stressed that these efforts should continue at pace. She reiterated her support for encouraging industry to do more in the online space.

16. ACTION: Home Office and other members to assist in supporting data deep dives on domestic abuse to better understand the discrepancy between national crime reporting and what is being reported locally by charities. College of Policing to support this process through improving the sharing of best practice, pulling this together to ensure a consistent national footprint.

17. ACTION: Home Office to work with NPB members to support the improvement of multi-agency working at the national and local level regarding CSEA.

Summary of Crime Trends

- 18. THE HOME SECRETARY** noted the positive new ways of working and data sharing which must continue after the COVID-19 response without a return to inefficient working practices. The Home Secretary stated that she was appalled to hear about cases of the Asian community experiencing heightened levels of victimisation during COVID-19. She also expressed deep concern at increased levels of assaults on police officers and emergency workers. It was reported that there was more to do on these issues, including on right wing extremism and that there would be further work focussing on the health and wellbeing of police officers.
- 19. MARTIN HEWITT QPM** introduced the item and reported that while there had been an overall reduction of acquisitive and serious notifiable crime, work had begun to consider the crime landscape during the recovery phase. It was reported that new ways of working had improved policing and intelligence efforts and that further work would be carried out to understand how the emergency would impact on future performance management statistics. It was reported that the NPCC had been engaging with negatively impacted communities through liaison officers and thanked the Crown Prosecution Service for their work on assaults on police officers.
- 20. THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME AND POLICING** thanked the NPCC for gathering real-time crime statistics and encouraged forces to bolster their efforts to tackle crime at a time when overall levels were below average. He stated his commitment to the wellbeing of police officers and praised their resilience during the COVID-19 response.
- 21. THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR SECURITY** thanked forces and agencies for their joined-up working and warned that there was evidence to show criminals had been adapting to exploit the outbreak of COVID-19. He highlighted that further work would continue with the Cabinet Office, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs and other government departments on cyber threats and public sector fraud.
- 22. LYNNE OWENS CBE QPM** reported on the ways in which criminals had been exploiting the COVID-19 response by adapting their activity. She also warned of the likely increase in certain crime types during the recovery phase.
- 23. DAN GREAVES, CRIME DIRECTOR, CRIME, POLICING AND FIRE GROUP** outlined Home Office work, in partnership with law enforcement, to draw together a single assessment of what is happening to crime during COVID-19. He also provided an overview of plans to assess what the short, medium and long-term implications would be for crime trends and the implications for the policy response and operational posture. He was keen that this was developed in partnership with colleagues across policing and law enforcement and would reach out to key partners to participate in a workshop to begin this work.

24. In discussion, the establishment of the police covenant and other wellbeing and safety initiatives received support from the board. It was reported that work is underway to consider what the threat may look like for Counter Terrorism during the recovery phase and beyond and that work to protect critical national infrastructure had taken place during the COVID-19 response.

25. THE HOME SECRETARY thanked the Board for their contributions and agreed that there was more to be done to collect data and gather insights on crime over this period. She asked the board to work together to better understand the increase in assaults on emergency workers.

ACTION: Home Office to work together with other Government departments to better understand the drivers of assaults on emergency workers, and that NPB members should continue to report back with concerns and issues.

ACTION: NPB members to work with Home Office to develop a strong, cross-system assessment of likely short- and longer-term impacts of COVID-19 on crime trends and the opportunities and challenges of recovery.

Drugs Supply, including County Lines

26. THE HOME SECRETARY invited **THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME AND POLICING** to introduce the item. He reported the success of pilot projects to address drugs supply in London, Liverpool and the West Midlands. He noted that the Independent review of drugs by Professor Dame Carol Black had given policing interesting analysis to reflect on in terms of drugs supply. It was reported that drugs supply and county lines would be considered at a future Crime and Justice Task Force meeting with the ambition of further rolling out the model operation identified through the pilots.

27. In discussion, the efforts of the NCA, NPCC, British Transport Police and the wider policing network were praised for their ongoing work to tackle drugs supply and county lines.

28. THE HOME SECRETARY thanked members for their contributions and noted the success of the current pilots and the need for these efforts to be expanded.

A look towards recovery from COVID-19

29. THE HOME SECRETARY opened the item by noting the future uncertainty but emphasised that the positive changes in collaborative working and data collection should continue into the recovery phase.

30. MATTHEW RYCROFT CBE, PERMANENT SECRETARY updated the board on Home Office activity to look at the changing landscape in three phases: the context in

which policing operated during the response; the priorities for the Home Office to adapt; and how the department would operate with the policing system.

- 31.** In discussion, it was noted that PCCs had been working with the Home Office and NPCC on immediate and long-term financial planning and that local Criminal Justice Boards had adapted by increasingly using video links to meet virtually. It was reported that the NPCC had been carrying out work to deal with backlogs in the criminal justice system. Members agreed to continue to work collaboratively and were also asked to contribute to assisting a dedicated team of Home Office officials that would assess the likely crime impacts in the recovery phase.
- 32. THE HOME SECRETARY** thanked members for their contributions and noted that further work was required to pull together data to best plan for the next phase.

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- 33. No further points of business were made.**

Closing

- 34. THE HOME SECRETARY** thanked attendees for adapting their ways of working during the national emergency and emphasised the need to continue to work together to continue to tackle hidden crimes and harms, particularly on vulnerabilities. She thanked members for their support in responding to COVID-19 and concluded the meeting.