



Minutes

Title of meeting	Police Covenant Oversight Board
Date	13 October 2021
Time	12.30 – 13.30
Venue	2 Marsham Street / Virtual Meeting
Attendees	Kit Malthouse – Minister of State for Crime and Policing – Chair Martin Hewitt – Chair of the National Police Chiefs’ Council Andy Marsh – CEO, College of Policing Andy Rhodes – College of Policing/National Police Chiefs’ Council Lisa Winward – Chief Police Officers’ Staff Association John Apter – National Chair of the Police Federation England and Wales Paul Griffiths – President of the Police Superintendents’ Association Kim McGuinness – Association of Police and Crime Commissioners Andy Tremayne – Association of Police and Crime Commissioners Karin Phillips – Welsh Government Peter Spreadbury – Deputy Director, Home Office Sally Parkinson – Director, Home Office Iain Barton – PCOB Secretariat, Home Office Zahra Torabi – Wellbeing lead, Home Office Kate Williams – Communications lead, Home Office
Apologies	Ben Priestley – Unison John Robbins – CPOSA

1) Welcome and introductory remarks

RT HON KIT MALTHOUSE MP, THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME AND POLICING, welcomed attendees and updated the Board on the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill which is progressing through the House of Lords. He anticipated the Bill would receive Royal Assent by the Spring.

2) Actions from the previous board

DELIVERY GROUP UPDATE

ANDY RHODES updated the Board on the first meeting of the Delivery Group on 31 August. He explained that he was the interim Chair for the first meeting, which was structured around the priorities list agreed at the previous PCOB. Terms of reference have been shared with the Delivery Group and programme management has been established. HMICFRS were not available for the first Delivery Group but Andy Rhodes had since met with them and a request will be made for a representative to join the PCOB. The next Delivery Group would take place on 29 October.

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME AND POLICING welcomed progress, particularly on mental health pre-deployment training. However, he asked how progress would be measured on the delivery of this work at the frontline and what steps we could take to accelerate delivery.

ANDY RHODES explained that he would seek support from HMICFRS in monitoring the delivery of the work by including the work in the PEEL inspection framework. Pre-deployment mental health training is going to be part of the Policing Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF) requirement training and the PEQF team would write out to trainers and provide best practice workshops. The College of Policing would use existing channels to seek assurances from training providers on delivery.

ANDY RHODES informed the Board that HMICFRS had agreed to support the National Police Wellbeing Service (NPWS) on the implementation of occupational health (OH) standards by developing a value for money profile on forces' spend on OH. He explained that there is a governance structure in place for the different Covenant workstreams, which would drive forward delivery and be updated on the Delivery Group dashboard.

ANDY MARSH explained that the College was building resilience and wellbeing standards which would be delivered through the National Leadership Centre. The College also had the ability to introduce a statutory requirement where needed and, while this had not been used often, this could be considered if the Oversight Board believed it was necessary. He also explained how more should be done to work with and support the Occupational Health Nurse Advisors.

KARIN PHILLIPS stated that a number of areas of work in the Delivery Group dashboard were devolved to Welsh Government and agreed to discuss the implications of this with Andy Rhodes outside of the Board.

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME AND POLICING asked the Board to consider the possibility of seeking a commitment from Chief Constables to ensure delivery of the workstreams in forces. He also stated there should be a role for Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to provide assurances on the delivery of this work.

ACTION – Delivery Group to explore options for ensuring forces enact the changes identified and required by the Covenant and report back to PCOB.

JOHN APTER advocated for staff association representation at the Delivery Group. He also expressed support for ensuring the Covenant delivers tangible change and that he believed any push for delivery from the College would be well received.

LISA WINWARD queried whether there should be consideration of the potential read across between the work on the Delivery Group and relevant Police Regulations that created obligations for police forces, such as pay and ill-health retirement.

FAMILY SUPPORT MODEL

ANDY RHODES and **KIM MCGUINNESS** discussed the family support model, including a proposal to seek an extension to the planned Open University, Kings College London and Royal Foundation research into support for emergency workers. They proposed including a focus on police officer and police staff families to understand their support needs. They also set out the international examples of awareness-raising about available support to police families and suggested some of these examples could be introduced quickly.

PAUL GRIFFITHS noted the importance of ensuring the needs of serving officers and staff was fully understood before working to understand the experiences of the families of officers and staff and developing the family support model.

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME AND POLICING also noted that research should factor in the former partners of police officers and staff, to understand any link to family breakdown. He also recommended that the families of retired officers be included in any research.

ACTION – NPWS and the APCC to seek the inclusion of former partners of police officers and staff and families of police leavers in the OU research.

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

KATE WILLIAMS set out the proposed two phased approach to communications and the importance of tangible support under the Covenant, to inform case studies of the benefits for officers and staff. The planned first phase was to use the coming months, as services under the Covenant are developed, to research audiences and channels, with the support of policing communications colleagues, develop branding for the Covenant and a video, filmed around forces, setting out the aims and principles of the Covenant. The second phase would be bringing forward proposals for a possible future paid-for campaign to be discussed at the next Board meeting.

MARTIN HEWITT agreed that the communications must demonstrate substantial support and delivery under the Covenant.

PETER SPREADBURY highlighted the importance of personal stories, such as those heard at the recent Police Bravery Awards, and the lessons that can be learned from existing work in policing when considered branding and communications.

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME AND POLICING also noted the importance of PCCs in communications and that local communications must be part of any plans. He emphasised the parallel with the Armed Forces Covenant which required communications in local organisations to ensure the local community understood the impact of the Covenant.

ACTION – Home Office to work with other organisations' communication teams to produce a Covenant brand and communications products which can be used locally. The proposals will be presented at a future Board.

3) Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Role

ANDY RHODES set out the developments on the CMO role. He updated the Board on discussions with Public Health England about the CMO role which were positive. PHE

requested more details on the role before offering further support. He explained more work was needed to set out the tactical role of the CMO and collaborate with the Armed Forces NHS team to understand their work. Andy proposed that a paper be prepared for the next Board, once the CSR settlement is known, so that additional funding can be considered for the CMO role. He suggested there was also the option to build on the interim CMO role within existing College governance infrastructure, and raised concern about the challenge of finding one individual to cover all the specialisms required for the role.

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME AND POLICING suggested exploring alternative models within the same cost and capability such as an expert panel or more than one CMO.

ANDY MARSH emphasised that if the College becomes more prescriptive in setting standards then it would be important for that work to have credibility through a strong foundation of medical advice.

ACTION – NPWS to present a paper to the next Board which specifies the CMO role.

4) Occupational Health Standards

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME AND POLICING noted this agenda item had been discussed earlier in the meeting.

LISA WINWARD explained that it was important to be clear on where there is a responsibility on the service in the context of OH services and where there is responsibility on the NHS to provide services.

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME AND POLICING asked that consideration be given to understanding the current picture of services and facilities for officers and staff to ensure clarity on what is already available and where forces may be providing similar services in different places.

ACTION – Delivery group to provide KM with an ITN on what is currently offered to staff and families (eg. Flint House, ONAPPS, internal forces, staff associations) and then how this interlinks/differs to NHS offering.

5) AOB

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME AND POLICING asked the Board whether they would find it helpful for HMICFRS to be represented at the PCOB as he had some initial concerns regarding conflicting status. The Board agreed this was the right approach.

ACTION – PCOB Secretariat to invite HMICFRS representative to the next Board.

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME AND POLICING thanked the Board for their work so far and hoped the next Board would be in a position to agree key delivery updates.

Next Oversight Board meeting: 13.00-14.00, 12 January 2022 (subject to parliamentary business).