



Home Office

National Policing Board Minutes 3 November 2021

Title of meeting	National Policing Board
Date	3 November 2021
Time	09:30-11:00
Venue	2 Marsham Street
Chair	The Rt Hon Priti Patel MP: Home Secretary

Attendees

- The Rt Hon Priti Patel MP: Home Secretary (Chair)
- The Rt Hon Kit Malthouse MP: Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Probation
- The Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP: Minister of State for Security and Borders
- Rachel Maclean MP: Minister for Safeguarding
- Matthew Rycroft CBE: Permanent Secretary
- Martin Hewitt QPM: Chair, National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC)
- Dame Cressida Dick DBE QPM: Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service
- Marc Jones: Chair, Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC)
- Andy Marsh QPM: Chief Executive Officer, College of Policing
- Graeme Biggar CBE: Interim Director General, National Crime Agency (NCA)
- Sir Thomas Winsor: HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary & HM Chief Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services
- Matthew Jukes QPM: Head of UK Counter Terrorism Policing
- Jae Samant CBE: Director General, Public Safety Group
- Chloe Squires: Director General, Homeland Security Group
- Rachel Watson: Policing Policy Director, Public Safety Group

Special invitees

- The Rt Hon The Lord Herbert of South Downs CBE PC: Chair, College of Policing
- John Apter: National Chair, Police Federation of England and Wales
- Paul Griffiths: President, Police Superintendents' Association
- Maggie Blyth: National Policing Coordinator for Violence Against Women and Girls
- Donna Jones: Joint Lead for Victims, APCC
- Shaun Hipgrave: Protect and Prepare Director, Homeland Security Group

Welcome, introduction and actions from previous meetings

1. **THE RT HON PRITI PATEL MP, HOME SECRETARY** opened by thanking all attendees for their ongoing support. She remarked that it is a busy time operationally, and that she was particularly grateful for the collective policing effort that had gone into the COP26 summit in Glasgow. The Board was provided with the opportunity to comment on actions recorded from the previous meeting; no comments were made.

Police delivery of security for MPs

2. **THE HOME SECRETARY** opened the item by reflecting on the recent killing of Sir David Amess MP. She noted the ongoing multi-faceted response to the incident and remarked that she would welcome attendees' thoughts on where there might be further opportunities to strengthen policing's delivery of security for MPs.
3. **MATTHEW JUKES QPM, HEAD OF UK COUNTER TERRORISM POLICING** thanked Homeland Security Group colleagues for their collaboration in responding to the incident. He explained the provisions that the police have put in place to ensure the immediate safety of MPs. He spoke about the work that is currently underway to review the operational processes for ensuring MP security and he commented that, for the most at-risk MPs, the police are working alongside the Royal and VIP Executive Committee. Finally, he emphasised that the close tripartite working between policing, the Home Office, and Parliamentary authorities will be key for ensuring the effective delivery of improved MP security measures.
4. **MARTIN HEWITT QPM, CHAIR, NPCC** emphasised the need for consistency across forces, including the need for a consistent package of MP security measures that forces can then tailor and use. He remarked that policing's review into MP security arrangements will also look at online abuse of MPs because it is a significant issue that affects most MPs' sense of security.
5. **DAME CRESSIDA DICK DBE QPM, COMMISSIONER, METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE** added that from a tactical perspective, the Parliamentary estate and its immediate surroundings is an area where freedom of speech can rub up against nastiness and unlawful behaviour. She reflected that we very rightly do not have a police state, but the intimidating behaviour that MPs and Parliamentary staff may experience in the vicinity of the Houses of Parliament contributes to a feeling of insecurity.
6. **THE RT HON KIT MALTHOUSE MP, MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME, POLICING AND PROBATION** reflected on MPs' security at their homes, both in their constituency homes and official London residences, and commented that there is more to be done in ensuring MPs are aware of the guidance available to them.

7. CHLOE SQUIRES, DIRECTOR GENERAL, HOMELAND SECURITY GROUP

commented that the Cabinet Office is currently leading wider work around the Defending Democracy Programme. She also reflected that the package of work being undertaken on MP security is an important opportunity to look at the range of threats to MPs' safety, and the range of ways that those threats manifest.

8. THE RT HON DAMIAN HINDS MP, MINISTER OF STATE FOR SECURITY AND BORDERS

echoed attendees' comments about the strong policing response to the tragic incident of Sir David. He observed that their own online safety is now a concern for many MPs. He remarked that many people feel there is a direct link between the general coarsening of language in society, through to unpleasant behaviours, and ultimately through to threats to MPs' safety.

9. ANDY MARSH QPM, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, COLLEGE OF POLICING

commented that Martin Hewitt's leadership at the NPCC had been incredibly important in bringing the rapid policing response together in the wake of Sir David's killing. Giving his full support to the proposed review into MP security, he highlighted that the College has already worked with relevant partners to issue guidance on how policing can ensure the security of MPs when they are campaigning. He also reflected that, from his own experience as a police officer, this tragedy has the potential to create a sense of hyper-vigilance among MPs and Parliamentary colleagues, and so policing needs to support them through this particularly challenging period.

10. SHAUN HIPGRAVE, PROTECT AND PREPARE DIRECTOR, HOMELAND SECURITY GROUP

reflected on attendees' comments and said that the Home Office will work with partners to ensure MP security measures are more dynamic, which includes working with constituency offices. **MARC JONES, CHAIR, APCC** supported this, adding that there needs to be a recognition of the different types of threat that female MPs and PCCs face compared with their male colleagues. He also commented that a lot of Parliamentary candidates come from a local government background, where it is standard practice for local councillors' addresses to be published online. He emphasised that there needs to be a move away from candidates' details being published, regardless of what level of government or public office they are standing for, to make it easier to keep candidates safe when they stand election for Parliament.

11. THE HOME SECRETARY

closed the item by thanking all attendees for their contributions to the discussion. Whilst recognising that many issues will need to be unpacked further in the course of the review, she reflected that guidance to MPs on how to keep safe needs to be more directive, and that more regular training and advice should be given to MPs. She emphasised that she was keen for the review into MP security arrangements to take place promptly.

12. ACTION: Homeland Security Group and policing to reflect the Home Secretary's and Board members' points from the discussion as they work with partners to progress the review of MP security.

Operational review and forward look

- 13. THE HOME SECRETARY** opened the discussion by explaining that the *Operational review and forward look* will now be a standing item at National Policing Board meetings, to review operational challenges the police have been dealing with and to look at important upcoming issues. She reflected that many of the incidents being dealt with by the police have a significant impact on the public, so it is right that these are raised and discussed in this forum.
- 14. THE HOME SECRETARY** invited **MARTIN HEWITT** to provide an overview of recent operational issues and challenges, including the policing response to recent protests. He reminded members that the Covid-19 virus is still prevalent and that, although from a policing perspective it is now lower priority, the police are keeping a watchful eye on any future response that may be required. He remarked that recovery of the criminal justice system is now a significant priority for policing, and that this has strong links with the need to tackle violence against women and girls.
- 15. DAME CRESSIDA DICK** commented that the Police Uplift Programme is now paying dividends in priority areas such as tackling county lines drug trafficking and stabbings of under-25-year-olds. However, she agreed that policing is now feeling the post-pandemic effects on the criminal justice system. She remarked that, for front line officers, policing during the pandemic has been incredibly challenging, and she expressed her concerns over officer wellbeing. She noted that, although policing has managed to shift its focus onto public order over the past 18 months, this may be to the detriment of policing's ability to tackle other threats, such as serious and organised crime and the dark web. **THE HOME SECRETARY** fully acknowledged Dame Cressida Dick's concerns over officer wellbeing and that it has been relentless for those on the front line.
- 16. THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME, POLICING AND PROBATION** reflected on crime and policing performance more generally and observed that crime trends are broadly heading in the right direction. The Minister spoke about some of the measures that the Government has introduced to tackle homicide in hotspot areas, and that this feeds into the work on violence against women and girls, given that a significant proportion of murders are domestic.
- 17. Reflecting on drug-related crime, GRAEME BIGGAR CBE, INTERIM DIRECTOR GENERAL, NCA**, emphasised the positive joint working that has taken place, particularly between the NCA and the Metropolitan Police Service on crime reduction. He also commented that what cuts across the entire agenda for this meeting is the online space, where we are seeing a lot of new crime and more cyber enabled crime. He remarked that the sector is only in the foothills of where it needs to be in engaging with and responding to online threats.

- 18. THE HOME SECRETARY** moved the discussion on to mental health services and children's health services, remarking that mental health-related incidents take up a lot of policing's time and resource and she wishes to be kept abreast of winter pressures or trends that operational colleagues notice. **THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME, POLICING AND PROBATION** commented that he has seen some excellent work on mental health and some good examples of joint working in the Humberside area, which has helped to reduce mental health-related demand on the police service.
- 19. THE HOME SECRETARY** suggested that the College of Policing, working with the NPCC and APCC, should identify and share the good examples of where policing and other public services have worked together to reduce mental health-related demand and to alleviate winter pressures, including on ambulances. **ANDY MARSH** confirmed that the College does indeed have this knowledge available to share but the current set-up of the public services system, including the National Health Service, is not conducive to this type of knowledge-sharing. He commented that the good examples of joint working between policing and other local partners are often based on personality and specific local arrangements, which makes it difficult to replicate on scale. **THE HOME SECRETARY** agreed that the system is very fragmented and that, collectively, Government and partners need to work together to resolve this issue. **JAEE SAMANT CBE, DIRECTOR GENERAL, PUBLIC SAFETY GROUP**, reflected the current operating model for mental health more generally is under strain. She committed to convening partners from across policing and government, including the Department of Health and Social Care, to try and resolve the issue.
- 20. THE HOME SECRETARY** closed the item by thanking members for their contributions, and reiterated that she is keen to continue having substantive discussions on operational challenges at future Board meetings
- 21. ACTION: The Home Office to convene key partners from across policing and government to ensure join-up and stronger points of contact on mental health and social care, to help tackle this issue.**
- 22. ACTION: The College of Policing, working with the NPCC and APCC, to share with the sector the examples of good practice taking place on mental health and social care joint working.**

Violence against women and girls – confidence and accountability in policing

- 23. THE HOME SECRETARY** opened the item by welcoming the Special Invitees into the meeting and thanked them for joining. She remarked that policing needs to move quickly on the issue of tackling violence against women and girls, and that there is much more that needs to be done in rebuilding the public's confidence. Recognising that policing has learnt a lot from failings in tackling violence against women and girls,

she explained she was keen to discuss the work that is now underway in policing to address those failings. She emphasised that she expects consistency across the country in terms of the response to violence against women and girls.

- 24. THE HOME SECRETARY** invited **MAGGIE BLYTH, NATIONAL POLICING COORDINATOR FOR VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS**, to brief the Board on her work since taking up post in mid-October 2021, and to provide reflections on policing's plans to improve its response to violence against women and girls. **MAGGIE BLYTH** gave an overview of the strategic delivery plan she is coordinating to tackle violence against women and girls. She highlighted that restoring public trust and confidence in policing is at the heart of her work. She also emphasised that the NPCC delivery plan will tie into the recent Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services' (HMICFRS's) report on the issue.
- 25. SIR THOMAS WINSOR, HM CHIEF INSPECTOR OF CONSTABULARY**, pointed to the same HMICFRS report and drew the Board's attention to the report's finding that the public perception of the police is closely linked to the culture in policing. Speaking about some of the issues that need to be addressed, he noted that some anti-corruption units are currently too professionally incurious when investigating potential inappropriate or unprofessional behaviour by other officers.
- 26.** Whilst fully welcoming and supporting the extensive work being done across policing to enhance the police response to violence against women and girls, **MARTIN HEWITT** reiterated the importance of ensuring that the various reviews and delivery plans are aligned.
- 27.** Some members remarked that policing does a lot of good work in seeking to maintain strong professional standards across the service. However, **DAME CRESSIDA DICK** remarked that the regulation around police professional standards and ethics panels could be reviewed to ensure appropriate scrutiny. She affirmed that there is a big task ahead in rebuilding public trust and confidence. She mentioned the '*Violence against women and girls: Action plan*' that the Metropolitan Police Service had developed with support and engagement from Maggie Blyth. Finally, she reiterated that she was appalled by the actions of recent high-profile cases of violence against women and girls linked to the Metropolitan Police Service, and she assured the Board that she and the organisation as a whole are taking swift action in response.
- 28. DONNA JONES, JOINT LEAD FOR VICTIMS, APCC**, noted the importance of PCC leadership in securing and maintaining public confidence in policing. She welcomed the creation of Maggie Blyth's role but remarked that there needs to be a greater national infrastructure, spread across all forces, that is dedicated to tackling violence against women and girls and which is centrally coordinated by Maggie. She added that there need to be dedicated senior oversight officers appointed in every force to focus on this issue. She also commented on the need to ensure more is done on domestic abuse

cases and victims are handled through the justice system and in the longer term on prevention by looking at adverse childhood experiences.

- 29. THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME, POLICING AND PROBATION** expressed support for Maggie Blyth's plans and reflected on the work that is currently underway across government on rape and serious sexual offences. **RACHEL MACLEAN MP, MINISTER FOR SAFEGUARDING**, also echoed her support for the plans but highlighted that there is a long way to go in rebuilding public trust and confidence. She emphasised that policing and the Government should communicate more effectively, and more visibly, on the work that is underway to tackle issues such as violence against women and girls, to show that all partners are taking these matters seriously. Finally, she remarked that she would welcome a meeting with **DAME CRESSIDA DICK** to discuss policing's approach to dealing with violence against women and girls. **GRAEME BIGGAR** commented that the NCA has also been looking internally at its own culture in light of recent events. In addition, he affirmed that the NCA will support Maggie Blyth's and policing's efforts, particularly on child sexual exploitation and abuse and online harms.
- 30. THE HOME SECRETARY** closed the item by reflecting that it has been a very dark moment for policing, which has been corrosive and has had a terrible impact on public confidence. She welcomed all the work and reviews that are underway to learn lessons and consolidate findings on what has gone wrong in relation to recent-high profile events. She emphasised the importance of raising the bar and restoring the public's trust and confidence in policing, particularly among women and girls.
- 31. ACTION: All Board members to support Maggie Blyth in her delivery plan to improve policing's response to violence against women and girls.**
- 32. ACTION: All Board members to come together to promote positive stories and strong, visible communications with the public about the work policing is doing to tackle issues related to violence against women and girls.**
- 33. ACTION: The Minister for Safeguarding and Dame Cressida Dick to meet to discuss policing's approach to dealing with violence against women and girls.**

Stronger and more diverse leadership in policing

- 34. THE HOME SECRETARY** invited **THE RT HON THE LORD HERBERT OF SOUTH DOWNS CBE PC, CHAIR, COLLEGE OF POLICING**, to open the item. Lord Herbert explained that the College has conducted a Fundamental Review into how it can make its services more useful to the sector. He flagged that three key themes have emerged from this work: boosting professionalism, driving consistency, and improving leadership at all levels across policing. He emphasised that improving the College's leadership development offer needs to be focused at all levels starting with the constable and

sergeant ranks, not just senior leadership. He noted that the sector wants and needs to see a growing cadre of police officers who can exercise sound judgement and demonstrate strong leadership and authority. Being clear that this was not a criticism of HMICFRS's work, he remarked that the resources the sector spends on developing the police service can feel slightly imbalanced when you consider the resources spent on inspection. Whilst noting there are competing priorities for resource, he said there is a question for policing, and the Government, on how much value is placed on the development and professionalisation of the police service. Finally, he briefly outlined the specific proposal to cast the College of Policing as the national leadership centre for the sector.

35. ANDY MARSH added to Lord Herbert's presentation by explaining that developing the leadership offer to all ranks across the service will help ensure greater consistency across individual forces. He finished by asking the Board to support the College's proposed plan for policing leadership. **THE HOME SECRETARY** thanked Lord Herbert and Andy Marsh for all the work they had done on developing the plan, then opened up the discussion to all attendees.

36. SIR THOMAS WINSOR and **MARC JONES** expressed support for the College's plan, both remarking that there needs to be consideration of when in an officer's career leadership development, and other training, should be available. They both commented that leadership development should start earlier in an officer's career than is currently the case.

37. MARTIN HEWITT also expressed support for the plan and emphasised that the College's work in this area is fundamentally important. However, noting that a comparison is often drawn between the military and policing in terms of when officers begin their leadership training, he cautioned that the sector needs to be realistic about expectations. He explained that, in the military, an officer often undergoes their leadership training whilst they are not on operational duties. He reflected that police officers are rarely not operational and so there will be a cost involved to rolling out a revamped leadership offer to officers.

38. THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME, POLICING AND PROBATION welcomed the College's focus on the sergeant level in terms of leadership development. Noting that some of the first cohort of officers coming through the Police Uplift Programme will be approaching that rank and looking to career progression and promotion, so the review is very timely. **JOHN APTER, NATIONAL CHAIR, POLICE FEDERATION OF ENGLAND AND WALES**, also agreed that the College's plan is a positive step forward and a good opportunity for junior ranks. He reflected that training across the service is currently seen as an abstraction from policing rather than an investment, and that that way of thinking needs to change. Whilst expressing support, both he and **DAME CRESSIDA DICK** welcomed the emphasis on the leadership development offer for police constables, as that cohort of officers can demonstrate extraordinary leadership potential.

39. PAUL GRIFFITHS, PRESIDENT, POLICE SUPERINTENDENTS' ASSOCIATION, also gave his support to the College's work and spoke about a new programme that his staff association is setting up for police middle management. He emphasised that the Police Superintendents' Association is very supportive of thematic and geographical consistency in terms of the leadership development offer across forces. He noted that support from Black, Asian and minority ethnic officers is also key when considering a transformation of the leadership offer across all ranks.

40. THE HOME SECRETARY closed the item by thanking all attendees for their unanimous support for the College of Policing's plan for policing leadership, and she paid tribute to Lord Herbert's leadership on the College's Fundamental Review. She reflected that policing is a people business and that investment in the police service's own people is essential. She affirmed that she would like to return to the topic of stronger and more diverse leadership at the next Board meeting.

41. ACTION: All Board members to support the College of Policing's plan for policing leadership, and for the College to continue its planned next steps at pace.

AOB

42. No further points of business were made.

Closing

43. THE HOME SECRETARY closed the meeting by thanking all attendees for their insightful contributions. She reiterated that it has been a challenging time for policing recently but that there is lots of work being done to make positive changes to the police service. Finally, she remarked that, in the run-up to Christmas, the Home Office should work with Martin Hewitt and the NPCC to communicate to the public the great work that policing has done and continues to do to keep us all safe.

44. ACTION: The Home Office and the NPCC to work together on developing public-facing communications to highlight the positive work being done by policing, in the run up to the Christmas period.