



Home Office

National Policing Board Minutes 28 March 2022

Title of meeting	National Policing Board
Date	28 March 2022
Time	13:00 – 14:30
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
- Rachel Maclean MP: Minister for Safeguarding
- Martin Hewitt QPM: Chair, National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC)
- Dean Haydon QPM: Senior National Coordinator for Counter Terrorism Policing, Metropolitan Police Service – for Dame Cressida Dick DBE QPM: Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service, and Matthew Jukes QPM: Head of UK Counter Terrorism Policing
- 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
- Jaee Samant CBE: Director General, Public Safety Group
- Jonathan Emmett: CONTEST Director, Homeland Security Group – for Chloe Squires: Director General, Homeland Security Group
- Rachel Watson: Policing Director, Public Safety Group

Special invitees

- The Rt Hon The Lord Herbert of South Downs CBE PC: Chair, College of Policing
- Deputy Chief Constable Ian Critchley QPM: Lead for Child Protection, NPCC
- Chief Superintendent Paul Fotheringham: President, Police Superintendents' Association
- Police and Crime Commissioner Donna Jones: Joint Lead for Victims, APCC
- Becky Wyse: Tackling Exploitation and Abuse Director, Public Safety Group

Welcome, introduction and actions from previous meetings

1. **THE RT HON PRITI PATEL MP, HOME SECRETARY** opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending the tenth Board meeting. She gave the Board's collective and her personal thanks to **SIR THOMAS WINSOR, HM CHIEF INSPECTOR OF CONSTABULARY AND FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES**, for his stewardship of HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) over the past ten years. She reflected on the incredible support he had given her and previous Home Secretaries during his tenure, and the valued work he had done on behalf of the public.
2. **THE HOME SECRETARY** remarked on the positive progress made in the recruitment of new police officers through the Police Uplift. Speaking more broadly about policing, she commented that police conduct and integrity issues were impacting public confidence in policing. Thanking Dame Cressida Dick for her work as Commissioner, she remarked on the complex issues facing the Metropolitan Police Service and the need for it to improve.
3. **THE HOME SECRETARY** invited **RACHEL WATSON, POLICING DIRECTOR, PUBLIC SAFETY GROUP** to provide an update on actions from the previous meeting. She informed attendees that the review into security measures, advice and guidance that is provided to MPs was ongoing, and that the Speaker and the Home Secretary were due to receive a final report and recommendations by the end of the month. She also updated on the engagements that had taken place between the Government, policing and healthcare partners to ensure better join-up across policing and government on mental health and social care. Remarking on the point about mental health services join-up, **THE HOME SECRETARY** reiterated to the Board that there is still much more to do on data-sharing.

Operational update and incident reporting framework

4. **THE HOME SECRETARY** opened the item by saying that the police faced significant operational challenges on a weekly basis, and that she was grateful to everyone at the NPCC for their work on coordinating the policing response to these challenges.
5. **THE HOME SECRETARY** invited **MARTIN HEWITT QPM, CHAIR, NPCC** to provide an overview of recent operational issues, and key upcoming challenges that the police would face in the next few months. He explained that, in terms of Covid, policing resilience was holding up, but infections and absence rates were increasing. Turning to recent protest activity, he remarked that this had been well-managed in individual force areas and that the number of environmental protests had been low, although this was expected to increase over the summer. He then spoke about policing's preparations for the set-piece events that were being planned for the summer, including the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations and the Commonwealth Games.

6. **DEAN HAYDON QPM, SENIOR NATIONAL COORDINATOR FOR COUNTER TERRORISM POLICING, METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE** explained that a significant proportion of the country's Jubilee celebrations would take place in London and around Buckingham Palace, and that planning was underway for those events from a counter terrorism policing perspective.
7. **GRAEME BIGGAR CBE, INTERIM DIRECTOR GENERAL, NCA** spoke briefly about the NCA's response to cyber threats facing the UK. He also explained that there was a lot of NCA activity in response to small boats crossings in the English Channel, particularly at the UK border and further upstream.
8. **THE HOME SECRETARY** acknowledged that addressing these challenges was not easy or straightforward, and thanked law enforcement partners for their joined-up approach to tackling all these issues. **THE RT HON KIT MALTHEUSE MP, MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME, POLICING AND PROBATION** echoed the Home Secretary's thanks and said that policing and law enforcement were delivering on the Home Secretary's strategic policing pillar of 'trusted by the public to work together as one'. He also thanked policing for their work on county lines, reflecting that policing now had the resources to accelerate their response to county lines drug trafficking.
9. **THE HOME SECRETARY** closed the item by remarking that there had been some fantastic operational work done by policing over the previous few months, and that she expected this to continue.

Public confidence in policing

10. **THE HOME SECRETARY** opened the discussion by outlining some of the recent serious failings in policing. She remarked that many high-profile cases - such as Sarah Everard's murder, the sharing of inappropriate material on WhatsApp, and Child Q – were damaging public confidence in policing. She noted that the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) had live 'abuse of position for sexual purpose' investigations at around half of all 43 forces in England and Wales. She stressed that policing needed to do the right thing by the British people and keep them safe.
11. Turning to how policing partners were responding to these challenges, **THE HOME SECRETARY** noted that there was some great work being done by HMICFRS, the College of Policing and the IOPC to move the dial. She emphasised that forces needed to inspire and motivate their officers, particularly new recruits, to be better leaders, change the culture in policing, and to help boost and recalibrate public confidence.

- 12. THE HOME SECRETARY** thanked **ANDY MARSH QPM, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, COLLEGE OF POLICING** for the College's work on the proposed new talent and leadership programmes and welcomed his views on how better leadership and development could help resolve the cultural and behavioural issues in policing to drive improvements in public confidence. Andy remarked that policing understood the impact that the incidents mentioned by the Home Secretary had caused to public confidence. He said that for each one of those incidents there would have been evidence that could have led to opportunities for senior leaders to intervene, and that this supports the need to improve policing leadership. He spoke about the College's work on leadership and boosting professionalism and said that the College was developing its national Plan for Policing Leadership with policing, and that it had been endorsed by the NPCC and Chiefs' Council in March and would include new opportunities to train, develop and promote officers. He added that there is still probably appetite to go even further with the proposals.
- 13. THE RT HON THE LORD HERBERT OF SOUTH DOWNS CBE PC, CHAIR, COLLEGE OF POLICING** echoed Andy Marsh's comments around whether policing is doing enough, even with the College's vital talent and leadership reforms. He remarked that policing needed to constantly remind itself that police performance, culture and integrity are intrinsically linked, and all feed into public confidence. He reiterated the importance of instilling the values of professionalism and integrity into officers from the moment of joining the police service. Remarking that there was not enough performance management in policing, he said that the College's National Centre for Police Leadership would be a good first step in redressing this – particularly for frontline supervisors.
- 14. SIR THOMAS WINSOR** agreed that performance management was woeful in some parts of policing. Speaking from his own personal experience, he praised the empathy of most officers on the frontline and remarked that when individuals are treated and cared for well by the police, those individuals tend to have more confidence in policing.
- 15. Referencing all the good work being done across policing – for example, by DCC Maggie Blyth, National Policing Coordinator for Violence Against Women and Girls, the work around professional standards, and the College's Plan for Policing Leadership - MARTIN HEWITT, DEAN HAYDON and THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME, POLICING AND PROBATION** each reminded the Board that there were many good police officers but the various cases that had surfaced could impact the morale of new recruits. **MARTIN HEWITT** remarked that policing fully accepted there was a real issue with culture and behaviour in some parts of the service, but said the system was not completely broken. He emphasised the importance of ensuring proper accountability in policing with clear professional standards, whilst still ensuring that the police could fulfil their duties effectively. Finally, he remarked that there needed to be a collective plan across the sector for how the police communicate with the public on the actions being taken to improve public confidence in policing.

16. PAUL FOTHERINGHAM, PRESIDENT, POLICE SUPERINTENDENTS’

ASSOCIATION and **MARC JONES, CHAIR, APCC** both agreed that the work of the College of Policing was key to addressing the issues around leadership and public confidence in policing. **MARC JONES** noted that an increasing number of PCCs were holding public accountability meetings, to build public transparency and work with their forces to look at public confidence - he wanted to see even more PCCs doing this and learn from “what works”. He reflected that PCCs had a role in supporting Chief Constables in changing the culture in policing and improving confidence. **GRAEME BIGGAR** and **THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME, POLICING AND PROBATION** echoed the points around culture, and agreed that Chief Constables faced a tough balancing act in fighting crime, rebuilding confidence in policing, and ensuring that forces set out up front the culture that they aspired to create.

17. DONNA JONES, JOINT LEAD FOR VICTIMS, APCC remarked that there was still some reticence among police officers and staff in reporting inappropriate behaviour, even anonymously. She reflected that, as the number of robust police investigations resulting in disciplinary action increased, more people would be reassured that anonymous reporting would result in tangible outcomes. She also commented that police misconduct hearings needed to be held in public, or at the very least their minutes published afterwards, to give the public confidence that the police were following rigorous and transparent processes. She stressed that it was only a small percentage of officers who demonstrate inappropriate behaviour, and that most police officers discharged their duties brilliantly.

18. IAN CRITCHLEY, LEAD FOR CHILD PROTECTION, NPCC said that he was optimistic about the responses the police were developing to improve public confidence in policing. He remarked that forces were looking to root out both overt and covert inappropriate behaviours, and that work was being done to ensure individuals displaying such behaviours could not enter the service in the first place. He linked this back to the challenges the police faced regarding the media perception of the culture and behaviour in policing, and how this fed into public confidence. **RACHEL MACLEAN MP, MINISTER FOR SAFEGUARDING** remarked that a key focus needed to be on the groups disproportionately affected by the fall in confidence, including black communities and women and girls.

19. THE HOME SECRETARY closed the item by thanking members for their contributions. She stressed that addressing issues around police culture, integrity and performance was fundamental to improving the public’s confidence in policing. She reflected that people typically joined the police service to serve their local communities, and she affirmed that policing needed to rekindle its positive relationship with the people it serves. Referencing the good work being done by the NPCC and College in this space, she remarked that the police needed to demonstrate the changes that had taken place across forces to ensure greater consistency of standards and professionalism. She fully endorsed Donna Jones’ concerns about the police ‘marking their own homework’ when

it comes to police misconduct and integrity, and that this needed to be addressed urgently. The Home Secretary recognised that it was only a minority in policing who were displaying such terrible behaviour, but she commented that focusing on that minority would help the entire police service raise the bar.

20. ACTION: Board members to develop a coherent and comprehensive plan across policing for how public confidence issues will be tackled and communicated to the public. An update on this will be provided to the Home Secretary by end May 2022 and brought back to the next meeting of the National Policing Board.

Child protection

21. THE HOME SECRETARY opened the item by reflecting on the recent tragic, high-profile deaths of small children and the awful accounts of children being exploited by grooming gangs. Although policing plays a big part in child protection, she recognised that it was not for the police alone to protect children from harm. She said that a whole-system approach was needed and that other services needed to play their crucial parts too.

22. THE HOME SECRETARY invited **IAN CRITCHLEY** to speak about the work being done by policing. Referring to the previous discussion on public confidence, he remarked that, as well as leadership, policing needed to show care and compassion. He recognised that some public incidents of child abuse could have been avoided through protecting and preventing. He also reminded the Board that police staff and officers dealt with some truly horrific cases, and that this could take a toll on staff and officer wellbeing. Referencing the 12,000 children that the police safeguarded in the previous year, Ian said he was working with the College to bolster leadership and capacity in dealing with demand from child protection cases, and that more work on prioritisation needed to be done. He remarked that certain areas of policing, such as digital forensics, needed to be improved further – particularly as the number of victims coming forward increased and put further demand on the system. Lastly, Ian informed the Board about the work his team and policing are doing in tackling young people offending against other young people. Overall, he explained that the police have identified some key core common themes around helping to safeguard children, and that his team are collaborating more closely with the College and HMICFRS in this space – particularly around leadership and standards. He finished by saying that there is absolute commitment and an incredible amount of work being done across policing to turn the tide on tackling child abuse.

23. ANDY MARSH thanked Ian Critchley for his collaboration with the College. He said that a key question for the sector was whether the policing and law enforcement system had the skills it needed to tackle the issue of child abuse. Explaining that the College could do more to help upskill policing, he informed the Board that only around 2,000 officers

had completed specialist child protection training and that this number needed to increase. He mentioned the vulnerability and risk training programmes that the College was delivering, and the work that it was doing to create a digital twin of each police force to show blind spots in forces' skills and capabilities – all of which should support Ian in his work as policing's child protection lead.

- 24. DONNA JONES** reflected briefly on the terrible cases of Star Hobson and Arthur Labinjo-Hughes, and she remarked that forces were doing their best to prioritise child abuse cases. Based on her significant previous experience from working in local government, she said that she was keen to see improvements in how Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASHs) operated. **THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME, POLICING AND PROBATION, SIR THOMAS WINSOR** and **PAUL FOTHERINGHAM** each agreed with Donna on the importance of the multi-agency response. Paul emphasised the need to have confident and competent officers in MASHs, with strong leadership at different levels. He explained that the Police Superintendents' Association was working with the College to roll out peer-to-peer training on working on child abuse cases, and that providing these sorts of training opportunities was essential from a leadership perspective. He also highlighted a core issue for tackling child abuse was information sharing, where data protection requirements could act as a barrier rather than a facilitator to multi-agency working.
- 25. GRAEME BIGGAR** said that, in terms of tackling child abuse, the NCA's focus was online and was uncovering more and more cases linked to the online space. From working with local police forces on individual cases, he said the NCA was finding that there was inconsistency in performance across forces. Referring to the fall in child abuse-related prosecutions, he reflected that there needed to be better technology to catch perpetrators and that there needed to be a clearer understanding of the level of evidence required by the Crown Prosecution Service to proceed with prosecuting suspects. Graeme also drew out challenges of effective sentencing, and highlighted ongoing work between NCA, Home Office and policing to support the courts' understanding of the harm caused by online abuse through victims' statements. **THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME, POLICING AND PROBATION** agreed with Graeme's point on improving the use of technology and spoke about the various innovative technologies that he knew the police were developing.
- 26. MARTIN HEWITT** remarked that there needed to be a strategic, whole-system approach to stopping attitudes and behaviours early on in young people's lives that might make them more likely to commit child sexual abuse and exploitation when they grow up. He reflected that there were different risk tolerance levels across agencies, which often slowed down the response to child abuse. He recognised that cross-system working was challenging and that investigations were complex and time-consuming. He remarked that, in some cases, data and third-party materials could take up to a year to be shared. **THE MINISTER FOR SAFEGUARDING** echoed these comments and said

that there needed to be a 'step change' in data-sharing and the use of different data systems across agencies.

- 27. THE HOME SECRETARY** closed the item by thanking everyone for their insights. She said that there was a significant role for the College in improving policing's response to tackling child abuse. She recognised the need to improve the cross-agency response to child abuse, noted the importance of doing more to understand and prevent the escalation of offending behaviour, and affirmed that more needed to be done around officer training and professional development. She said that she wanted to see a tighter and more ambitious programme of work across policing to drive progress in tackling child abuse, and for performance to be tracked more effectively and consistently. Overall, she recognised that tackling child abuse was a significant challenge, but that policing had a critical role to keep vulnerable children safe in partnership with other frontline services.
- 28. ACTION: Home Office, working with DCC Ian Critchley, to bring together a paper summarising cross-Government and policing work to strengthen a) information/data-sharing and b) partnership working on child protection, and which identifies opportunities to drive further improvements in multi-agency working. An update on this will be provided to the Home Secretary by end May 2022 and shared with National Policing Board members prior to the next meeting.**
- 29. ACTION: Home Office to work with policing to consider how performance data on child sexual abuse (including on case progression, outcomes, workforce and training) can be used to support a more consistent victim-centred approach across the country, and ongoing Crime and Justice Taskforce consideration of wider CJS performance on CSA.**

National Policing Board sub-governance

- 30. THE HOME SECRETARY** invited **THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME, POLICING AND PROBATION** to provide an update on the National Policing Board sub-governance. He explained that the Police Uplift Programme remained on track to deliver 12,000 additional officers by the end of March 2022. He also drew the Board's attention to the National Audit Office's recently published value-for-money report on the Uplift Programme, highlighting the brilliant work being done by policing. **JAEE SAMANT CBE, DIRECTOR GENERAL, PUBLIC SAFETY GROUP** echoed the Minister's remarks about the largely complimentary National Audit Office report and thanked everyone around the table for their efforts in making such strong progress in the Uplift Programme. She reminded the Board that, whilst the Uplift target was to have 20,000 additional officers by March 2023, in practice that meant all those new recruits needed to be in the pipeline by September 2022 to ensure the target was met. **THE HOME**

SECRETARY reiterated this point and noted that the retention of new recruits would become more important as the labour market tightened.

31. THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME, POLICING AND PROBATION spoke briefly about the focus of the next Crime and Policing Performance Board meeting on combatting drugs, and he mentioned the new Digital Crime and Performance Pack that was now available to PCCs and the police to give them regular access to more up-to-date national information about crime trends. Finally, he informed attendees of the significant progress the Strategic Change and Investment Board (SCIB) was making since the acceptance of the Major Law Enforcement review recommendations. The Minister explained that the SCIB's last meeting focused on policing's data analytics capability, and that work continued across the sector to ensure there was more coherence on the issue.

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32. THE HOME SECRETARY and **JAEE SAMANT** both reiterated their thanks to Martin Hewitt for the NPCC's work on developing new arrangements for proactively reporting information on high-profile policing incidents to the Home Office.

Closing

33. THE HOME SECRETARY closed the meeting by thanking all attendees for their insightful contributions and for their commitment to addressing the important issues that had been discussed. She reflected that the demand on the police service was likely to increase over the summer, particularly with protect activity, but that the provisions in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill would help the police in tackling some of that demand.