

Note of Meeting

Dyfed Powys Police Accountability Board.

Penmorfa, Aberaeron, Ceredigion.

6 August 2018

William Powell and Ian Roffe.

Context.

1. As Panel members we observed the Board Meeting, but were not participants. The meeting had a small number of participants. From the Police there were the CC, DCC, Director of Resources, Staff Officer and Media Officer. From the OPCC, the meeting was chaired by the Commissioner, who was accompanied by the CEO, the Director of Finance and an administrator. The previous Accountability Board had been hosted by Crickhowell High School, Powys and was attended by several students and others. Reference was made at the outset to the absence of the wider public, but there was no evidence of the meeting having been significantly promoted.

Key Question: Accountability.

2. As Panel Members a key question for us was the accountability exercised by the Commissioner on Police activities. During the 3 hour meeting, the Commissioner asked detailed questions of fact and meaning on a wide range of operational policing matters. His background formerly as a police analyst was clearly beneficial in focusing onto relevant issues. There was a lot of good practice reported which the Commissioner recognised and explained that he wanted to focus into areas of improvement. This was agreed and formed the track for the meeting.

3. Overall, the meeting was very focused onto performance over Q2, with the Commissioner taking the lead in all questioning. The dynamics between the OPCC and the Police were very good. There was clear transparency and an openness from the Police and OPSS to share developments and current issues. Responses went beyond the factual into interpretation and how this influences current policing practices.

4. The Commissioner clearly exercised an accountability function during the course of the meeting. The inter-personal dynamics were positive and transparent.

5. At the end of the session held 'in public,' Panel members were invited to make any observations or ask any questions, ahead of leaving the room for those items that were to be considered 'in camera.' It was more of a courtesy, given the nature of our presence at the meeting, rather than an opportunity to open up major issues. It had been previously observed by that there was limited information given as to the reason for the final items being exempt. This is an area where the Panel should seek procedural clarity, in terms of the criteria that apply.

Information for PCC Panel Members.

5. This note is not intended as a full report, but the following features should be of interest to PCC members. Sir Tom Winsor (HMIC) had recently visited the Force and met with the Senior Officer Team. The Commissioner had also had met him over dinner. The meeting went well and was considered a useful briefing on policing the largest area in England and Wales. Sir Tom was reported to have appreciated the challenges.

6. There was a direct enquiry by the Commissioner on police sickness absences - a topic raised by the Panel at its last meeting. The DCC reported that there were 3 groupings with high sickness and he was making managerial enquiries on supporting these areas. A mental health specialist has been appointed that would be beneficial for future action.

7. Police overtime issues were explained in the context of budget control. The options here were constrained. Summer incomers meant the need for more policing. There were also potential issues regarding

restricting overtime later in the year. Reference was also made to concerns regarding the potential for additional pressure to be experienced by the Police service in the coming months, in the event of a 'no deal' Brexit. The very same issue was covered by the BBC on Tuesday, 7th August, following discussions with the National Crime Agency (NCA) and the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC.)

8. Police Staff costs will be controlled for the remainder of the FY by reducing the number of police intake in September from 22 down to 16.

9. Public Order Section 35 orders (these relate to dispersal orders to individuals and groups). The recent RWAS Show was discussed and the DCC reported that these orders are now used very often to disperse individuals and nip trouble in the bud. For policing in Tenby during this summer, it was explained that communications between door staff, PCSOs and police were a priority again with the intention of identifying potential trouble before it escalated.

ENDS