

**GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL
MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON 24 JULY 2024 AT FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE**

PRESENT:

Councillor Janet Emsley	Rochdale Council (Chair)
Councillor Richard Gold	Bury Council
Councillor Peter Dean	Oldham Council
Councillor Aftab Hussain	Oldham Council
Councillor Barbara Bentham	Salford Council
Councillor David Lancaster	Salford Council
Councillor Vimal Choksi	Tameside Council
Councillor Rose Thompson	Trafford Council
Councillor Dane Anderton	Wigan Council
Majid Hussain	Independent Member
Angela Lawrence	Independent Member

Also in attendance:

Kate Green	GM Deputy Mayor
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Officers Present:

Ian Cosh	Chief Finance Officer, GMP
DCC Terry Woods	GMP
Supt. Gareth Parkin	GMP
Supt. John-Paul Ruffle	GMP
Supt. Mike Russell	GMP
ACO Barry Moore	GMFRS
Peter Fitzpatrick	GMFRS
Sarah Scoales	GMFRS
Neil Evans	Director of Police, Crime, Fire & Criminal Justice, GMCA
Lee Teasdale	Senior Governance & Scrutiny Officer, GMCA
Dominic Coleman	Senior Policy & Partnerships Officer, GMCA
Claire Postlethwaite	Deputy Treasurer, GMCA

PFCP/39/24 APPOINTMENTS OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS

RESOLVED/-

- (i) That the following five members local authority members be appointed to both the Police, Fire & Crime Panel and Steering Group to achieve the Balanced Appointment Objective:

- A: Councillor Barbara Bentham (Labour) (Salford)
- B: Councillor Rosemary Barratt (Labour) (Stockport)
- C: Councillor Aftab Hussain (Labour) (Oldham)
- D: Councillor Robin Garrido (Conservative) (Salford)
- E: Councillor Angela Smith (Conservative) (Rochdale)

PFCP/40/24 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Garry Bridges (Manchester), Councillor Rosemary Barratt (Stockport), Councillor Robin Garrido (Salford), Councillor Angela Smith (Rochdale), Councillor Tom Morrison (Stockport) and Councillor Sandra Walmsley (Bury) (substituted by Councillor Richard Gold).

PFCP/41/24 CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

There were none.

PFCP/42/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED/-

1. That there were no declarations of interest.

PFCP/43/24 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 11TH JUNE 2024

Members considered the minutes of the previous meeting, and the following points were highlighted:

- PFCP32/24: It was asked that the request pertaining to statistics breakdown down stop and searches by ethnicity be chased up as these had not been made available yet.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the minutes of the meeting of 11th June 2024 be agreed as a true and correct record.

PFCP/44/24 THE BAIRD INQUIRY REPORT

Deputy Mayor Kate Green presented a report detailing the publication of the Baird Inquiry report into the treatment of people arrested and taken into police custody in Greater Manchester, with a focus on women and girls. Points highlighted included:

- Whilst the initial remit of the inquiry had been focussed around strip searches in custody, during the course of the interviews it became apparent that wider issues needed to be incorporated. Specifically, the process of and justification for arrests; further custody suite issues such as record keeping; the role of the custody sergeant in making detention decisions; the importance of leadership in custody suites; and recommendations in relation to the complaints process.
- The report included around 30 recommendations, mostly for GMP, but also some for the Deputy Mayor for Policing, Fire & Crime. Particularly in relation to scrutiny and oversight. There were also several national recommendations.
- Some of the most noteworthy recommendations included an end in totality of 'welfare' strip searches; firming up what defined a 'strip search' (a national framework recommendation); and the appointment of a professional to take an oversight role supporting independent custody suite site visitors, a role that would be created within the Deputy Mayor's directorate.
- In terms of recommendations around arrests there was a request to make more use of voluntary attendance to avoid unnecessary arrests; the avoidance of being perceived to have an imbalance and 'take a side' in disputes between neighbours/partners etc; appropriate usage of arrest packs; complaints handling and scrutiny arrangements.

- Further detail was provided on the further scrutiny arrangements being put in place in the Deputy Mayor's Office. These included the formation of a Mayoral Oversight Group that would ensure that the recommendations made by Dame Vera Baird were being actioned as instructed, and that, where appropriate, they were also being mainstreamed into 'business as usual'. It was also recommended that scrutiny panels and dip sampling processes were put in place, and recruitment for these would happen as soon as possible. In the meantime, the Deputy Mayor would continue to draw upon the expertise of the GM Independent Ethics Committee.

DCC Terry Woods was invited to address the Panel on GMP's response to the review:

- It was highlighted that a number of the recommendations made had been picked up as actions within the HMICFRS Custody Inspections report that had been previously brought to the Panel.
- A robust and extensive action plan had now been running for a number of months. This included an extra £3.1m worth of investment into custody, with staffing increased by 62% (140 extra people), and £7.4m investment into the reopening of Longsight custody suite.
- DCC Woods would be the Gold Response for the overseeing of the Baird Review recommendations and would approach it with the same vigour as those that arose from the Manchester Arena Response Review.
- There was confidence that through scrutiny arrangements that the public would soon be reassured that the recommendations were being fully addressed.

Comments and Questions

Panel Members were invited to make comments and ask questions.

- Reference was made to the plans around inaugurating the Oversight Board. What would the composition of the Board be? It was advised that the constitution of the Board was currently being considered, one of the issues that would need to be addressed with any external members would be vetting issues. As it was hoped that the Board could start in some form as soon as possible, the Ethics Committee and GCMA staff colleagues may be called up initially. The voices of lived experience would also be drawn upon to support the work of the Board.

It was also important to fully establish the parameters of the Board before it began so that duplication of work being directly undertaken by GMP could be avoided. It was confirmed however that the remit of the Board would not just be limited to strip searches and would consider the full range of the issues that had risen through the Baird Review. The Deputy Mayor would advise the Panel on progress made with this at the next meeting.

- Members emphasised the importance of culture change in achieving the recommendations and sought more information on how this was being approached. It was also asked if in-depth scoping exercises were taking place through other areas of GMP's work with the public, particularly in terms of racism and sexism, to avoid these sort of shock incidents arising in future. It was advised that Chief Constable was absolutely explicit that he sees the quality standards of behaviour as the most central priority.

The Recovery Plan for GMP was always planned to take place through several phases. Phase 1 was performance, which now to a large degree had been achieved. Phase 2 was quality standards and behaviour, and Force management had been underway on this for some time, The Chief and Deputy Chief Constable had personally seen thousands of GMP employees face and face, explaining that this was how GMP would become outstanding, through a ruthless focus on standards and behaviour. The right Culture was vital, and discipline where needed was a key strand of that. More people had been fired by GMP in recent years than ever seen in the past, with a zero-tolerance approach now taken to inappropriate behaviour. It was fully accepted that mistakes would be made in the job, and that was not the focus, overall behaviour and culture change was the focus.

- Reference was made to independent custody suite visitors (ICVs) – what reporting mechanisms were in place for them feeding back? The Deputy Mayor advised that she met in person with ICVs twice a year, as did the Mayor. The ICVs produced an annual report and the manager of the ICVs was part of the Deputy Mayor's team for constant feedback within the directorate.

However, the Baird Review did make a powerful recommendation around the need for an extra layer of understanding and intelligence gathering, applying what was being seen into a constant cycle of improving practice.

- Members sought further assurance that all of the recommendations raised within the report would be implemented and sought information on the timescales and associated costs. It was confirmed that all of the recommendations made to GMP had been accepted and would be implemented. The GMP website would publish the Implementation Plan which would allow the tracking of progress. At this point exact timescales could not be given, but the Panel would receive an in-depth update on the progress made together with the expected timescales for completion at an appropriate future date in the first half of 2025.

In terms of costs there had been a further funding of the custody function including additional staff. But whilst there could be some element of cost implications the recommendations should not result in too many direct costs if the culture changes could be made to stick.

- Members sought assurance that cultural expectations within the force would commence from the recruitment phase onwards. The Deputy Mayor agreed that the approach had to begin from the moment recruitment begun and embedded henceforth through training & development, retention, progression and the overall wider cultural change that would enable and encourage people to speak up.
- Members noted that only 15 people were interviewed as part of the Baird Review and sought further clarification why this was the case. The Deputy Mayor advised that the three women who had initially taken part in the Sky News report last summer initially engaged with the review (though one of the three declined to take part in the final review). The other participants all took part following a public call out for people who had experiences of GMP custody that they wished to detail. A number of these took part via stakeholder organisations who supported them throughout the process. There were also engagements with people who wished to remain anonymous and thus were not included as interviewees in the final report. The parameters for taking part were 2019 as a cut off starting point, to ensure that the assessment remained as objective as possible.
- It was asked if any reports of disquiet had previously been received from Independent Custody Suite visitors. It was advised that ICVs arrived unannounced at custody suites and worked to a thorough process of reporting on all their findings, and these reports sit within the broader scrutiny process. However, if an issue arises they are encouraged to engage on this straight away.

- It was noted that half of people interviewed should have not been arrested and ended up in the custody suites. What was being done to address this area of concern? DCC Woods stated that there were clearly incidents where the wrong judgement call had been made by an individual. Front line officers working in response services had predominantly under two years of service and a plan was now in place around better training of new recruits outside of the training school. This was being trialled in Rochdale, and provided a very robust process that gave officers better surroundings for decision making and judgement calls on the street.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the inquiry report be noted.
2. That it be noted that the Mayoral Oversight Board will oversee delivery of the recommendations in the report.
3. That the Deputy Mayor provide the Panel with an update at the next meeting on the progress made in inaugurating the Mayoral Oversight Board.

PFCP/45/24 GMFRS ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE 2023/24

Sarah Scoales (Head of Service Excellence, GMFRS) was invited to present the GMFRS Annual Statement of Assurance 23-24 to the Panel setting out the arrangements in place covering the timeframe from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024.

Comments and Questions

- Members raised a query regarding the volume of recruitment needed at GMFRS over the next five years – was it anticipated that there would be issues in meeting this? It was advised that the recruitment strategy was currently on track with a significant amount of work undertaken by GMFRS, particularly on attraction in the communities the service served. Diversity and the hiring of female staff to the service historically proved to be challenging and this was why they were a significant part of the attraction focus.
- Members asked if opportunities existed for shared learning between GMFRS and GMP on diversity and inclusiveness. The Deputy Mayor stated that she had raised this point internally, as GMFRS had been a trailblazer on this front, and an event

had taken place in conjunction with HMICFRS for services across the country recognising the progress GMFRS had made and using them as an exemplar of good practice. There was a real opportunity for the two services to be learning and sharing experiences with each other.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the paper and the report provided in Appendix A be noted.
2. That support be given to the publication of the report on the GMFRS website.

PFCP/46/24 GMFRS ATLAS PROJECT UPDATE

Peter Fitzpatrick (Station Manager, GMFRS) presented a report that provided an update on the GMFRS Atlas Project and associated work around it. Points highlighted included:

- Since commencement of the pilot 34 referrals had been received directly from probation services. Of that number, 11 were not suitable for a variety of reasons (largely physical or mental ill health), of those remaining, 3 could not attend due to recall to prison or gaining employment. However, all other referees completed the courses satisfactorily, and none have reoffended since completion. There were a significant number of positive outcomes referred to within the report.
- There had been considerable learning throughout the process for GMFRS as well, particularly from a trauma informed perspective. Appropriate staffing was now in place for the trauma informed team, and this has resulted in a person-centred methodology that would be used to develop further interventions across the service.
- Upon conclusion of courses a follow up psychological assessment is in place, and these had all seen immensely positive outcomes – particularly in terms of developing ‘purpose in life’.
- A number of awards had been received by GMFRS in relation to the Project.

Comments and Questions

- The Deputy Mayor highlighted how proud she was of the Project and its associated achievements and was very keen to progress more projects of this nature.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the Panel notes the contents of the report.

PFCP/47/24 ASB – OPERATION HURRICANE

Superintendent John-Paul Ruffle and Superintendent Gareth Parkin (GMP) made a presentation to the Panel that provided an overview of GMP's response to tackling and reducing anti-social behaviour on motorbikes, electric bikes and quad bikes. Key points highlighted included:

- Whilst ASB issues around off-road biking was a long-standing problem, the recent proliferation of E-Bikes had brought a new set of issues to tackle.
- In the past there had always been pockets of good work on tackling these issues, however there had not been a consistent force-wide approach to this. Recent years had seen significant investment into specialist capabilities including fleet, drones, vehicles, smart tag technology and additional highly trained staff.
- Trends over the past three years had seen an increase in this type of ASB, with Stockport, Bolton and Wigan having seen some of the highest increases.
- Hotspot response funding had been received from the Home Office and intelligence gathering had been used to ensure that this funding was utilised in the most critical hotspot areas within the region.
- Operation Hurricane was initially running during the peak season of June to September with the intention that it will subsequently be incorporated within business as usual.
- Local intelligence and knowledge was gathered from a range of partners including local officers, PCSOs, community volunteers, local partners and community safety teams.
- Further concerns around the usage of E-Bikes was highlighted, these were often kept within houses, which would often breach tenancy agreements and created further concerns around the risk of fire.
- In 2010 as part of savings packages, the dedicated GMP motorcycle team had been decommissioned, however additional reinvestment meant that this was now active again.
- The operation had been receiving positive feedback from communities and was being studied by other forces who were considering emulation of the model.

Comments and Questions

- Members asked about work that was being done to combat the procurement of unregistered bikes that have often been modified illegally. It was advised that work around licensing was a key tenet of the prevention work taking place. This included working directly in conjunction with trading standards on unlicensed goods, working with GMFRS on spot checks of premises, and addressing complaints from housing associations around the storage of bikes on site.
- Members emphasised the importance of noting that incidents were often not just cases of ASB, but also included other forms of criminality such as drug dealing by organised gangs. It was agreed that this needed to be kept in mind, and that it could often be difficult to distinguish between the two activities. There was a plan in place running in parallel around the use of E-Bikes for criminality.
- Further information was sought on how local reporting of incidents linked up with the Operation Hurricane command. It was advised that link ups with local intelligence took place every week so that emerging hotspots of activity could be identified, and resources could then be deviated into them accordingly.
- Members asked that statistics pertaining to the number of bikes seized, the number of warnings given, and the number of arrests made for the whole of GM be made available to the Panel. It was stated that these could be provided after the meeting.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the presentation and report be noted and support be given to the partnership working approach to proactively tackle and reduce ASB on motorbikes ebikes and quads.
2. That stats available on the number of bikes seized, the number of warnings given, and the number of arrests made for the whole of GM be fed back to the Panel

PFCP 48/24

GMP UPDATE – HMICFRS INSPECTION ACTIVITY

Deputy Chief Constable Terry Woods provided the Panel with an update on areas of business within GMP that have been subject to inspection by HMICFRS during 2024. It

was also advised that a child protection inspection had just commenced at the beginning of the week.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.

PFCP 49/24 GREATER MANCHESTER HATE CRIME PLAN – 2024-2028

Deputy Mayor Kate Green introduced a report setting out the process undertaken to develop the Greater Manchester Hate Crime Plan, setting out the priorities and actions within the Plan. Key points highlighted included:

- New elements added to the Plan included a more robust section on work within communities and enhancing of education opportunities.
- Significant work was taking place with communities to address the underreporting of hate crimes.

Comments and Questions

- Members welcomed the changes proposed within the Plan but emphasised the need to keep an eye on the ‘basics’ that were sometimes forgotten. There were still serious issues in place if many of the public still did not know what constituted a hate crime.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the Panel endorses the final Greater Manchester Hate Crime Plan and note that the plan was approved by the Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester.

**PFCP 50/24 STANDING TOGETHER 2022-2025 – PRIORITY 2, YEAR 3
PROGRESS REPORT: REDUCING HARM AND OFFENDING**

Neil Evans (Director Police, Crime, Criminal Justice & Fire, GMCA) presented a paper providing a year 3 progress update on the work undertaken to progress Priority 2

(Reducing Harm and Offending) of the Police & Crime Plan 2022-2025. Points highlighted included:

- Arrest rates had seen a 7.9% increase on the previous 12 months, this compared to a 43% increase in the year before that. However, rather than taking the force out of kilter, this was because GMP was now 'where it should be' in terms of arrest rates in comparison with other forces around the country.
- Domestic abuse outcome rates had increased in the past 12 months from 11% to 12.2% - whilst small figures in isolation, this was a statistically significant improvement. The outcome rate for rape offenses had also risen from 6.8% to 9.9% also representing a significant increase in charges.
- The reoffending rate for young people in the region was also highlighted, this had reduced to 29.6% last year against an England and Wales average of 32.2%. Within the context of the challenges faced by the region this was a strong achievement.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.

PFCP 51/24 POLICE AND CRIME PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Neil Evans (Director Police, Crime, Criminal Justice & Fire, GMCA) provided an overview of the approach to the development of a new Greater Manchester Police and Crime Plan. It was intended that the three existing priorities be retained. Full engagement would be taking place with all local communities as the Plan needs to reflect the priorities and worries of all our communities, so that they can have faith in it and feel the confidence to report.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the approach to developing a new Police and Crime Plan be noted.