

**OFFICE OF POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR GWENT**  
**STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD**  
**26<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2019**

**Present:**     **Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)**  
Mr J Cuthbert - Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)  
Ms E Thomas – Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC)  
Mr D Garwood-Pask – Chief Finance Officer (CFO)  
Mrs S Curley – Chief Executive (CEX)  
Mrs J Regan - Head of Assurance and Compliance (HoAC)  
Ms J Robinson – Head of Strategy (HoS)  
Mr R Guest – Head of Communications and Engagement (HoCE)  
Mrs E Lionel – Principal Finance & Commissioning Manager (PFCM)  
Mrs N Warren – Governance Officer (GO)

**Office of the Chief Constable (OCC)**

Ms P Kelly – Chief Constable (CC)  
Ms A Blakeman – Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)  
Mr J Edwards – Assistant Chief Constable (ACC)  
Mr N Stephens – Assistant Chief Officer, Resources (ACOR)  
Ms N Brain - Chief Superintendent, Head of Crime and First Point of Contact (HoC&FPoC)  
Mr I Roberts - Chief Superintendent, Local Policing Area, East (LPAE)  
Mr N McInain – Superintendent – Head of Professional Standards Department (HoPSD)  
Mr D Seymour – Inspector, Corporate Communications  
Mr S Payne – Detective Chief Inspector, Head of Analysis and Research (HoAR)

**Staff Associations**

Mrs L Davies (Unison)

The meeting commenced at 10:00am. The PCC welcomed DCC Blakeman to the meeting.

**APOLOGIES**

**Action**

1. Apologies for absence were received from Mr R Guest (Head of Communications and Engagement) and Ms M Henry (Police Federation).

**MINUTES**

2. We received and confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

**ACTIONS**

3. We received and noted the actions from the meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

The following updates were provided:

**Action**

**Action 2, Organisational Performance Report Against the Police and Crime Priorities**

The PCC requested further narrative in relation to action 2. We were advised that information regarding the management of repeat offenders had been incorporated within the Organisational Performance Report.

**Action 4, Force Delivery Plan 2019-20**

The Force Delivery Plan was nearing finalisation and the plan would be provided to the OPCC in the early part of next year.

**Outstanding Actions, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

**Action 17, People Plan/Learning And Development Strategy 2019-2022**

The PCC requested an update on the management of mandatory training, a comparison to other similar forces and the potential risks arising from officers not receiving the required mandatory training.

The ACC advised us that mandatory training was prioritised in order to ensure the safety of the officers, the public and to maintain service continuity. The number of officers attending Officer Safety Training and Force training days had increased by 29% and 2.4% respectively. The Chief Inspector in charge of learning and development was undertaking a review of the mandatory training processes and looking at how other forces were managing their mandatory training; this would form part of the overall Force Performance Framework.

**Action 22, Collaborative Projects - Gwent Performance Update**

The PCC queried why an update on the collaboration from a Gwent perspective had not yet been provided to the meeting. The CC explained this was mainly due to changes in staff and stated further information would be provided at the next meeting.

**CC**

The ACOR informed us that the Wales Audit Office (WAO) were undertaking a review on Collaboration that may assist, the report was due to be finalised in February 2020.

**ACOR**

**Outstanding Actions, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

**Action 8, Annual Review of Manual of Corporate Governance (MOCG)**

We noted that the Head of Joint Legal Services would be attending a Chief Officer Team meeting in early January to provide a briefing on the MoCG.

**Outstanding Actions, 30<sup>th</sup> November 2018**

**Action 3, Chief Constable's Budget Bid**

The PCC requested an update on the injury pension awards. The ACOR advised us the Force were liaising with CAPITA to identify the relevant personnel for review. The injury award review was progressing and the higher grade ill health retirement payment targets should be achieved by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. A detailed update would be provided to the Joint Audit Committee in December 2019. Regular updates would also be provided to the OPCC by the project lead.

**Action**

**ACOR**

#### **Action 11, Joint Risk Register**

The PCC queried how the risk had been mitigated in relation to the provision of forensic services when there was an expected funding issue. The CC explained the immediate funding issue had been removed as an anticipated request for additional funding had not materialised. The funding of forensic services continued to be a national issue of which the CC would continue to monitor.

### **We agreed to take item 5d, 'Crime Prevention Report'**

#### **CRIME PREVENTION REPORT**

4. We received a response to the detailed review undertaken by the OPCC in relation to the ongoing work by the Force to meet the Crime Prevention priority contained within the Police and Crime Plan.

The report outlined activity against the eight recommendations resulting from the review.

We were advised that a strategic lead for Crime Prevention had been appointed to establish robust governance and oversight for delivering crime prevention activity for internal and external stakeholders. A request was made to add the role of the strategic leads to the table on page two of the report.

**LPAE**

The scope of the local neighbourhood policing strategy meeting was to be expanded and the terms of reference amended accordingly, in order to incorporate the commitments within the Police and Crime Plan as well as all aspects of crime prevention work being undertaken across the Force. A representative from the OPCC would be invited to attend the meeting in future. Crime prevention reporting was to be scrutinised through various Chief Officer led meetings and would feed into the Strategy and Performance Board (SPB).

**LPAE**

Having reviewed the Police and Crime Plan and Force Delivery Plan, the strategic lead extended the scope of crime prevention activity to include serious and complex crime types as well as early intervention programmes. Tactical leads had been identified in each of the crime prevention strategy areas to ensure the Force focused on areas for improvement and to enable a joined up approach going forward.

The PCC queried how this cohesive work would be evidenced. We

were advised that crime prevention activity reporting would be well documented and contained in one area for ease of access and would be measured against set criteria and scrutinised through the Force governance structure.

The crime prevention strategy was to be expanded beyond local neighbourhood policing activity to include current and future demand as outlined in the Force Management Statement.

Funding arrangements had been put in place to ensure further development of a problem solving approach to all aspects of policing work. Problem Orientated Policing (POP) training would be rolled out across the Force in spring 2020.

Having met with the Crime Prevention Panels (CPP) in October 2019, the strategic lead for crime prevention advised us that he was reviewing the CPP constitution to establish if CPPs should be Police volunteers or community organisations. A potential procurement framework for the CPPs to source crime prevention products would also form part of the review. CPPs themselves had specified a preference to be a community organisation as it removed certain restrictions for them in relation to areas such as obtaining funding.

Local Crime and Disorder Reduction Officers (CADRO) had been briefed to ensure contact was maintained with their local CPPs and an action plan had been developed to ensure a cohesive approach between CPPs and other organisations such as Neighbourhood Watch initiatives.

The CEx requested an update in relation to the expected increase in CPPs as the OPPC currently provided their funding. The strategic lead explained that the CPPs were reviewing their constitution and consideration was being given to whether additional support could be provided by the Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO). A decision would be made with regards to the number of CPPs required at the conclusion of the review which should provide clarity in terms of funding.

A review was currently being undertaken to identify best practice in the use of community messaging and engagement tools and the CPP strategic lead intended to work in conjunction with the newly recruited Head of Corporate Communications. There was also an expectation that the new 'Single Online Home' website would bring greater opportunities for the Force in terms of both internal and external messaging.

The HoS asked if the community messaging would include information on crime prevention in relation to the more complex crimes and received confirmation that it would.

The CC advised us that she had recently become the Community Safety lead for Wales. Focus would be given to reviewing best practice and building a partnership approach to reduce drug usage and homelessness, the established community hubs would play a key part in this.

**Action**

The PCC requested an update on the Crime Prevention Report in due course.

**GO**

## **Ch. Supt Roberts left the meeting at 10:45am**

### **CHIEF CONSTABLE'S UPDATE**

5. We received the Chief Constable's Update Report.

The CC thanked everyone for their hard work over the last year, as it had been a difficult time with many staff changes and advised us that a new Head of Corporate Communication and a temporary Head of Human Resources had been appointed. The PCC thanked the CC and her team for their work during the changes and requested a current list of the roles and responsibilities of the current Chief Officer team. The CC agreed to share their portfolios.

**CC**

The CC informed us that she had reiterated key issues at the last two Team Gwent meetings, such as the importance of the Force change programme, the Police and Crime Plan priorities, financial challenges and the importance of maintaining professional standards.

The CC referred to various accomplishments within the report and emphasised the business benefits, which had resulted from significant investment in the capital programme, particularly in the area of collaborative digital services, some of which had been recognised nationally.

The implementation of various digital services had enabled swift and efficiently access to a large audience within the Force. Officers were able to order uniform online, access advice on Mental Health issues and areas of intelligence and research ethical dilemmas.

Officers were able to work remotely within their communities with the use of mobile phones, laptops and body worn video. These tools had assisted in bringing criminals to justice and proved to be a great asset to the Force.

The planned rollout of the new digital interviewing system was due to conclude in December 2019. The introduction of Office 365 in the coming year would be a significant change for the Force but would enhance productivity across the whole of the organisation going forward.

Further collaborative work was planned to support the delivery of the Policing Vision 2025. Gwent Police, South Wales Police and other collaborative partners were to meet in December 2019 to finalise collaborative priorities; a report would be presented to the PCC once a decision had been made. We were informed that the Force would also be investing in collaborative leadership training to ensure a greater understanding of the benefits going forward.

**Action**

The CC thanked those involved for the good results in the area of serious major crime, particularly the sensitivity that residents of the care homes were treated with during Operation Latte.

The CC emphasised the impact of the Cyber Community Support Officer and advised us that a report would be provided to the PCC to highlight the business benefits in due course.

**CC**

The HoS referred to Early Intervention and Serious Violence prevention and Serious Organised Crime (SOC) on page four and requested an amendment to the figures, as support had been received by over two thousand children.

**CC**

The ACC had recently become the regional Drug Steering Group lead and would be working proactively with partner organisations and Public Service Boards to ensure that appropriate services and structures were established in order to tackle drug crime. It was hoped that this would prevent escalation into SOC.

The CEx asked what the timescales were in relation to the rollout of the Serious and Organised Crime pilot across the Force. The CC advised us that timescales would be provided to the PCC before the PCP meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

**CC**

There had been an increase in the use of the Police National Database (PND) across the Force as further training had taken place. The DCC was the national lead on PND and in conjunction with the HoC&FPoC would be working on increasing usage further.

The CC commended the Force volunteers for their good work. Heddlu Bach had recently been in the media promoting their good work. Gwent Police had also been recognised in the media for their wellbeing initiatives and the use of the Social Media desk.

The CFO queried what the target establishment numbers were in relation to Police Special Constables. The CC explained that there was not a specific target number, although recently numbers had increased from 50 to approximately 90.

The PCC requested a report on Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) recruitment and any changes that could be made to improve the process. The CC agreed to provide a report to the next meeting.

**CC**

The PCC congratulated the Gwent Cadets for their contribution and professional conduct at the White Ribbon Event held at the Senedd on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

**Action**

## **ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE REPORT AGAINST THE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN PRIORITIES**

6. We received the organisational performance report against the Police and Crime Plan (the Plan) Priorities for Quarter two.

The ACC advised that the performance report had improved significantly in terms of providing the information required for scrutiny by the PCC. However, he acknowledged that additional evidential narrative would improve it further and informed us that it would be incorporated in future reports with assistance from the OPCC.

The Performance Framework had been progressed and was nearing completion. Once complete, the Framework would be monitored through the Force governance structure.

The ACC informed us that there had been a slight increase of 0.3% in overall recorded crime in Quarter Two 2019/20 when compared with Quarter Two in 2018/19.

There had been a sharp increase in violence without injury which was attributable to the rise in recorded harassment offences such as stalking or malicious communications. Approximately 55% of all domestic abuse cases were classed as violence without injury. The Force had invested in Safelives training, which had enabled better identification and awareness of these types of offences in order to protect the most vulnerable.

We were advised that the positive outcome rate had decreased from 11% to 5.7% this quarter. We were informed this was mainly due to how data was recorded; more complex crimes recorded in Quarter Two would not necessarily be finalised in the same quarter - there were approximately 4,000 crimes that had been recorded in Quarter Two but were still under investigation. The ACC advised that this would lead to peaks and troughs when reporting these figures but that it would average at year end. The PCC suggested explanatory narrative should be included in future reports to provide assurance and clarity to members of the public and the PCP regarding the reason for the increase.

**ACC**

The CC assured the PCC that outcome rates were continually monitored to ensure any issues were picked up at the earliest opportunity and resolved should there be a problem.

The ACC advised us that two of the largest outcome measures reflected in the outcome figures related to victims withdrawing support,

primarily linked to domestic abuse cases where the victim did not support an arrest of the identified suspect and where the investigation had been completed but no suspect had been identified.

**Action**

We queried how the overall positive outcome rate compared to other forces and in terms of supporting victims through to a prosecution. We were informed that the Force was not dissimilar to others in relation to the overall positive outcome rate and they were not an outlier in any particular crime type.

We noted there had been a decrease in the number of arrests and the ACC advised us that a review was underway to ascertain the reason for the decrease.

The number of Stop Searches had increased in Quarter Two by 37% compared to the average of the last eight quarters, with 22% of the searches resulting in a positive outcome. The increase was likely to be due to a change in approach by officers resulting from training in the use of Stop Search.

The PCC asked what was being done to reassure our communities that Stop Search was being used fairly and proportionately. The ACC informed us that there was a Force gold group responsible for monitoring the use of Stop Search with an Inclusion Officer forming part of the gold group. The Inclusion Officer ensured the public were made aware of the rationale behind Stop Search in their community. The Force's website publicised Stop Search figures and where the searches had taken place for transparency purposes.

The HoS stated that the BAME community were four times more likely to be Stop Searched but that the positive outcome rates did not correlate with that. Positive outcome rates were lower in the East at 13% where there was a larger BAME community as opposed to 26% in the West where there was a much smaller BAME community. It was agreed by the ACC that it would be beneficial for the HoS to attend the following Force Stop Search meeting and Operational Tactics Board in order to scrutinise the Force's approach and observe how the Force used the good practice identified in this area by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

**ACC/  
HoS**

The PCC requested clarification on the number of reported hate crimes. The ACC advised us that the quarterly two year average had decreased slightly and the two year trend had risen marginally. He stated that although there were significant increases in transphobic and religious hate crime in terms of percentage in the previous year, the number of crimes had remained low.

The ACC informed us that although the volume of 101 and 999 calls had increased, there had been a significant 40% reduction in



abandoned 101 calls as performance management in this area had improved.

**Action**

The First Point of Contact (FPOC) team had resolved approximately 2,000 calls upon receipt, that had led to a reduction in the requirement for officer deployment.

We asked how the Force were managing the demand and how they were educating the public in relation to issues that should be dealt with by other organisations in order to reduce demand further. The CC advised us that the new Single Online Home website would assist in alleviating demand, as service users would be signposted to the relevant agencies.

As Anti-social Behaviour and Public Order offences had been amalgamated, we queried what the Force were doing to tackle the issue and suggested that the Force approach should be evidenced within the report as the numbers remained high.

**CC**

The ACC advised us there had been a reduction in workforce absenteeism rates of 39% in comparison to Quarter One with the training of Supervisors and wellbeing initiatives had contributed to the reduction.

### **We agreed to take item j, the 'Chief Constable's Budget Bid'**

#### **CHIEF CONSTABLE'S BUDGET BID 2020/21**

7. We received and noted the CC's Budget Bid for 2020/2021.

We discussed the Police and Crime Panel meeting to be held on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2019 at which the Chief Constable's budget requirements for 2020/21 would be presented. We noted that this would not be the PCC's final budget and precept request; this would be presented in January 2020.

The PCC referred to current political uncertainty and asked what assumptions had been made in terms of Government funding going forward to enable the preparation of the precept proposal. He also sought clarification and justification for the request of a rise in precept given that that in 2018, a three year plan at 6.99% precept level had been put to the PCP.

The CC informed us she had been briefed in relation to the recent HMICFRS Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) Force inspection. The Force had seen significant improvement in the area of vulnerability and had been recognised for its good practice in Child Protection and Sex Offender Management over the past 12 months. This was consistent with SOC, receiving recognition for good practice in relation to good governance arrangements, partnership work

and operational delivery.

The Public Protection Unit (PPU), Criminal Investigation Department (CID), SOC and digital policing had received substantial investment and this had resulted in significant outcomes and increased performance. HMICFRS had acknowledged improved performance as reflected in the Value for Money (VFM) Profiles.

Further improvement was required in the areas of Stop Search, use of force, governance and anti-corruption.

The Force intended to make efficiency savings in relation to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) over the next 12 months.

The total number of calls received by the Force Control Room had risen from 294,000 calls to approximately 304,000 not including the 8,000 messages a month taken by the Social Media desk.

There had been an increase in crimes reported from 41,000 in 2016/17 to 57,000 in 2018/19, many of which were of a complex and serious nature.

There had also been an increase in officer establishment from 1,170 in 2017 to 1,336 by March 2020 with this number expected to increase to 1,375 by March 2021.

In terms of efficiency savings, the overtime budget was expected to decrease by £1 million down to £2 million over the year with the use of electronic time sheets, allowing line managers better oversight. A review of temporary roles was being undertaken to determine if there were any savings that could be made and further collaboration with other Forces was being considered in order to make further efficiency savings where possible.

Government funding for Operation Uplift would provide approximately 70% of the required funding for the increase in officer numbers. Should the requested 2% increase in precept to 8.99% not be granted, the impact on neighbourhood policing, Community Support Officers, human trafficking and front counter teams would need to be considered and if police numbers were to be capped, police staff cuts would be inevitable.

The Corporate Communications Department had received investment and a Head of Department had been appointed which would provide a strategic structure in relation to communication, consultation and engagement.

The £1 million investment for the M4 relief road had been utilised to fund capital investment.

The CC asked the PCC to consider the performance over the past year and future plans for the year ahead and advised us that should there be a flat cash budget, there would be challenges in sustaining the Force

## Change Programme and the Force Operating Model.

## Action

The ACOR presented the Chief Constable's future financial requirements.

We were advised that staffing numbers, cost pressures and planned efficiency savings had been captured within the report. The Capital Programme had been revised and aligned to the Estate Strategy, ICT and Fleet plans. Detailed borrowing requirements had been reviewed and funding for spending plans in relation to planned programme spend on larger projects had been clarified. The plan had been scrutinised in conjunction with the OPCC CFO.

The Force required £135 million to run the organisation during 2020/21, some of which would be Government grant funding, Police transformation funding and Welsh Government funding.

The ACOR referred to the request for an increase in precept of an additional 2% above the planned 6.99% and explained that funding provision was uncertain in the current political climate and assumptions had been made taking that into account. There could also be a delay in the provisional settlement from the Welsh Government and other funding which presented a real challenge to the Force.

The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) had been revised and there was gross funding gap of £8 million over the next 5 years based on the assumption that the Government grant would be flat cash funding and the precept remained at 6.99% precept. The ACOR informed us that an assumption had been made that 1% of the funding gap would be used to support the increase in officers related to Operation Uplift but this may change as the funding settlement was unclear.

A higher number of staff had been approved through the Service Improvement Board (SIB) than anticipated and budgeted for in 2019/20. This was based on evidence based activities, demand and capacity requirements. Forty more officers were recruited from the 6.99% precept received for 2019/20 to meet that demand. Forty additional police staff roles were then also required to support operational delivery. This cost was not included within the 6.99% precept bid. Partnership funding also presented a challenge.

An assumption had been made that the gap in Police Pension would not need to be subsidised by the Force as the £2.8 million Government funding was expected again in 2020/21. However, should the Government funding not be provided there would be a significant funding gap.

An assumption had also been made that there would be a £6 million funding gap through changes to the Government funding formula, as larger urban cities would receive a larger proportion of the funding.

The ACOR advised us that it had been assumed that School Liaison

Officers would continue to be funded by the Welsh Government.

**Action**

The Police establishment was expected to reach 1,336 by March 2020, with 46 new officers being recruited and 131 CSOs maintained and an additional 45 police staff employed. Temporary roles were to be terminated and roles made permanent where appropriate.

An assumption had been made that Police Transformation Funding for the Early Action Together Programme and the Regional Organised Crime Unit would need to be funded locally. This had been included in the cost pressures element of the report, as it was unclear if funding would be provided to the Force.

The ACOR informed us that VFM Profiles indicated that Gwent Police was a high cost Force and an outlier in terms of investment, particularly in local policing and support functions such as ICT. However, the Force were focussed on ensuring the investment delivered the expected business benefits. We were informed the Joint Audit Committee scrutinise the VFM Profiles.

The ACOR informed us that should the precept bid not be granted, consideration would need to be given as to whether the ambitious Force change programme would be sustainable, as the Force Development fund had been exhausted and the external training programme for the Force would need to be reviewed. The custody provision and the local government pension scheme would potentially also need to be reviewed.

The CFO informed us that if the maximum £24 precept increase had been requested in the previous year, it would have equated to a 10% increase. Gwent Police had requested £16.69 which equated to 6.99%, this was lower than the majority of other forces. The 6.99% precept level funding had been built into the MTFP and invested in police officer numbers as pledged to the PCP last year.

The CFO advised us that there were options of reducing the deficit without the need for a precept increase of 2%, as the gap in funding could be offset with the funding for the uplift in officer numbers and funding certain items non-recurrently.

The CFO informed us that he had also recently received confirmation from the Welsh Government that the Private Funding Initiative (PFI) credits would continue which would contribute to alleviating cost pressures further

The PCC thanked those involved in preparation of the bid.

Due to time constraints we agreed that the areas in which the PCC had a statutory responsibility to monitor would be discussed. The PCC advised that questions on the remaining reports would be collated by the OPCC and sent to the Force for a response to be provided in order to evidence scrutiny in these areas.

**We agreed to take item 3c, the ‘ Professional Standards Report’**

**Action**

**PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS DEPARTMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT  
QUARTER 2 2019-20**

8. We received the Professional Standards Department (PSD) performance report for Quarter Two of 2019/20 for monitoring.

We queried why two Independent Office of Police Conduct appeals (IOPC) had been upheld. The HoPSD informed us that the complaints were very similar in narrative to those they had received previously from the same complainants and were perceived to be duplicated. The PCC asked what was being done to prevent this happening again. We were advised that because there were sometimes very few differences between the complaints, it was difficult to determine if the complaint was a new complaint, however this was being monitored.

The HoPSD advised us there were no appeals received in this quarter.

A new vetting appeals panel had been established to ensure vetting appeals were being handled fairly and appropriately. The panel consisted of members of staff from the OPCC, Human Resources and PSD.

**We agreed to take item 3h ‘Victims Journey and Board Update’ next.  
VICTIMS JOURNEY AND BOARD UPDATE**

9. We received the Victims Journey Board Update Report for monitoring.

The ACC informed us that the Victims Board was instrumental in improving the service that victims of crime were receiving. The Force were focussing on a cultural change in ensuring victims were receiving the required support.

The ACC referred to the Victims Board objectives and advised us that they were key parameters in improving the Force approach to supporting victims in Gwent. The Victim’s Journey Day had been incorporated into officer training to help embed a change in culture.

The Connect Gwent Victim Performance Framework was in the process of being developed and once completed, further data would be made available to demonstrate the impact of the changes to the service provided to victims.

We were informed that the Corporate Communications Department had developed a communication plan to be presented at the next Victims Board in December 2019.

The Victims Board would also be monitoring the impact of the newly recruited Survivor Engagement role to ensure officers were drawing on the survivor’s past experiences.

## EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

10. The information contained in the report(s) below has been subjected to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Data Protection Act 2018 and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent's public interest test and is deemed to be exempt from publication under section 7.

### **We agreed to take item 5e 'Compliance with the Safeguarding of Children Presentation**

#### **SAFEGUARDING COMPLIANCE**

11. We received a presentation from the HoC&FPoC on Compliance with Safeguarding of Children.

Our attention was drawn to the safeguarding regulations contained within the Children's Act 2004. The All Wales Child Protection procedures had been reviewed and recently completed in readiness for implementation.

Monitoring of safeguarding was undertaken by the South East Wales Children's Safeguarding Board (SEWSCB), of which Gwent Police and the OPCC were key members. At the beginning of the year, Children and Adult Safeguarding Board meetings were combined and had been working well.

The CID and PPU Departmental reviews had identified a gap between demand for child abuse and serious sex abuse investigations involving children and the resources allocated to it. Although resources had been allocated to the Department, staff numbers remained an issue. The review was still ongoing, however we were assured that safeguarding arrangements were in place and that there were dedicated resources that could be utilised within the force for the most serious cases. Detective Chief Inspectors from the PPU had been deployed to East and West local policing areas to provide focus and to support officers.

We were informed that there had been a reduction in the number of children being detained in custody. Although a vast amount of work had been undertaken in this area since the HMICFRS Child Protection Inspection, the Force were reliant on Local Authorities providing safe accommodation. However, we were assured that custody officers had been fully trained to fulfill obligations in relation to the safeguarding of these children. A full assessment was undertaken on every child in custody which was monitored by the custody Inspector and the Head of the Criminal Justice Department. Good progress had been made against the Child Protection Action Plan and a follow up visit from the HMICFRS was expected in January 2020.

In terms of child protection demand, referrals were made to social services if there was any element of risk or harm to a child. Due to the lack of resources within the PPU department, officers were only able to attend occasional case conference meetings, but always ensured a case report was produced and forwarded to the conference.

**Action**

We were informed that in order to investigate child abuse cases and safeguarding within the PPU, a Specialist Child Abuse Investigators Development Programme (SCAIDP) had to be undertaken by all members of staff within the team. The majority of staff had now received the training and all PPU staff had received training in 'Achieving Best Evidence'. Officers undertook mandatory training within PPU prior to being deployed within the Force policing areas.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

12. None identified

### **TO IDENTIFY ANY RISKS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING**

13. There were no risks arising as a result of this meeting.

### **FOR INFORMATION**

14. We noted the minutes of the following meeting:

- Strategic Planning Group, 8<sup>th</sup> October 2019

**The meeting concluded at 1.30pm**