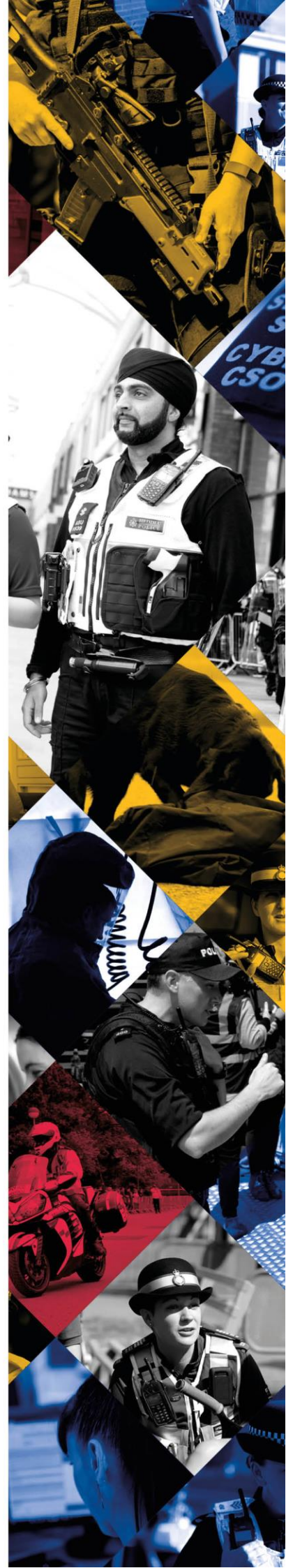




# Strategy and Performance Board

## Chief Constable's Update Report

March 2022



## 1. PURPOSE AND RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 To update members of the Strategy and Performance Board (SPB) of significant events and work that has recently taken place.
- 1.2 There are no recommendations made requiring a decision.

## 2. OPERATIONAL UPDATES:

### 2.1 Delivering the Operation Uplift Programme

Operation Uplift has continued to progress with the further successful recruitment of probationers in January 2022. Our last intake for year two of uplift is planned for March 2022 to fulfil our establishment numbers. As year two is ending, we are on track to achieve our uplift numbers. During this programme we have seen a significant increase in police officers from ethnic minorities.

### 2.2 Culture within the organisation

We continue to proactively promote the importance of professional standards and culture within the organisation. Significant work has been completed with PSD to ensure all staff have been briefed in person by senior leaders with regard to Abuse of Position for a Sexual Purpose. These presentations have captured new starters and professionals from partner agencies.

### 2.3 Increasing our opportunities for crime prevention and reduction

We continue to focus on reducing the demand caused by repeat offenders through effective offender management and we will improve the services we provide to our repeat victims.

We have reduced public order-type crime and incidents of anti-social behaviour along with reducing acquisitive crime through Neighbourhood Policing Partnerships, our We Don't Buy Crime initiative and our problem-solving hubs.

### 2.4 Covid recovery

Significant work is underway within Gwent Police in response to a COVID recovery plan. It has been proposed that a member of the Chief Officer Team would chair a Force Recovery Board that would provide strategic direction, whilst overseeing the recovery processes of all departments in line with an agreed recovery strategy. This would ensure that the Force is represented effectively within Welsh Government and UK Government forums, whilst adhering to the College of Policing and National Guidance (Op Talla). The chair will work closely with the Civil Contingencies Chief



Inspector who would oversee the continuation of Covid response activity together with specific actions.

## 2.5 First Point of Contact (FPOC)

### Technology

The department has recently finalised the procurement process for a new speech analytics product and are aiming to have this up and running in May 2022. This will coincide with the move to the new HQ. This product will give us a significant advantage in being able to quickly analyse and understand demand. It will allow us to identify the appropriateness of demand and plan with partners for problem solving, quality assurance and support wellbeing by analysing the sentiment and emotion attached to each call.

Through the Digital Contact Desk we continue to receive in excess of 11-12 thousand contacts via our social media channels per month. To put this into perspective this is more than our emergency call volume and about the same as the non-emergency connected calls per month. Work is underway to model this demand and establish a model and baseline that is suitable to accommodate this level of demand.

In December 2021 the virtual investigation business case was approved. The procurement of *GoodSam* will allow a Virtual Response Team (VRT), to interact with victims, live link to any scene of crime or incident and be utilised as a multi-agency platform to support the outcomes of the Blue Light Group. In addition we are scoping the use of Adobe Sign, not just for the benefit of completing evidential forms online but for the wider organisation to support remote signing of key documents that would normally require travel and an in-person signature.

### Performance & Demand

The most recent COVID wave has posed a real challenge for staff within the Force Contact and Control department (formerly FPOC), with the festive period in December being the busiest period on record. The staff were flexible, resilient and continued to deliver an excellent service despite the challenges they faced.

Increased demand to Police forces, via all contact channels, is replicated across the country. We continue to work with other forces to identify and develop new ways of managing demand. The head of FCC in conjunction with partners has developed a whole system performance data product. This informs the Local Resilience Forum, Regional Partnership Board and current Strategic Coordinating Group in relation to health and social care and its wider impact on blue light services and public service partners. This provides a whole system approach, identify areas for improvement through



projects and initiatives and serves as a guide to inform tactical leads in relation to system and demand issues at key times.

Our mental health team continue to be an invaluable asset to Gwent Police and our communities. The team not only prevent deployments but have been instrumental in the development of the practice to recognise and address incidents involving Acute Behavioural Disorder (ABD) and are working with WAST to develop their own form of mental health triage to ensure the roles complement one another.

## 2.6 **Custody**

Our custody and criminal justice staff work with professionalism to ensure that our communities are safeguarded, whilst ensuring that individuals kept in our detention receive appropriate care and support. Recent work within this department has seen:

The introduced of a formal DMM process that has focus on investigations for those currently in custody, domestic abuse cases, vulnerability and children.

The Bail and RUI approach is progressing with new processes agreed for file submission timelines for CPS advice following bail. We are soon to implement a structure for the review of those cases currently subject to RUI to ensure they have the appropriate supervisory oversight.

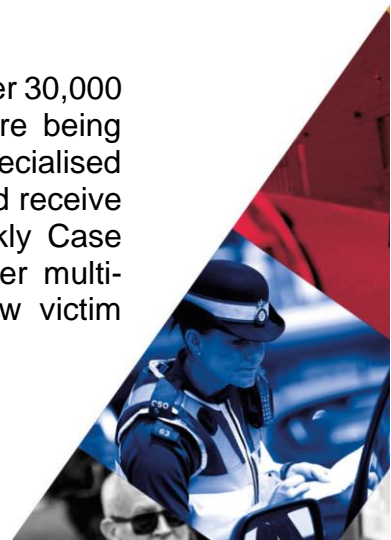
## 2.7 **Criminal Justice**

A domestic abuse file build team has been piloted with the aim of improving the file quality of domestic abuse cases sent to the CPS. Recent feedback from officers has been positive and of the files submitted to CPS none have been rejected. This will ensure those offenders responsible of domestic abuse are placed before the Court in an expedited manner.

Our Body Worn Video evidence system now has improved connectivity into our Digital Evidence Management System (DEMS) allowing the sharing of this vital evidence to prosecutors and partners with ease.

Work is on-going with Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service to deliver the 'Common Platform' project which will pave the way for increased ease of digital evidence sharing between Police, CPS and the Courts.

The Victim Care Unit has been in existence for six months with over 30,000 victims referred into the service. Continuous improvements are being made to ensure victims of crime are assessed/referred for specialised support, kept updated throughout the criminal justice process and receive their entitlements under the Victims Code of Practice. A weekly Case Management Meeting has been introduced to tailored and offer multi-agency support for our most vulnerable/repeat victims. A new victim



satisfaction survey has been launched which has reported increased levels of satisfaction since the opening of the VCU. The new survey model captures the whole criminal justice journey and will help us and partners improve and learn to minimise attrition.

The Witness Care Unit continue to guide victims and witnesses through the final part of their criminal justice journey, acting as a single point of contact from the first hearing to outcome.

Several focus groups and one to one sessions have been held with survivors of sexual violence and domestic abuse. The feedback received continues to be used to drive continuous improvement. This links in with the Victim Reference Group; a group of victims who meet bi-monthly to help consult on projects, processes and victim care across the force.

## 2.8 Local policing

Our frontline officers, both uniformed and detective resources, continue to deliver exceptional results whilst managing significant daily demand, all whilst often putting themselves in harm's way to protect our communities.

In response to the Government's pledge to end rough sleeping by 2027, Gwent Police are cognisant of this and are committed to tackling this issue. Operation Arreton is a response to this priority which focuses on begging, often found in conjunction with homelessness. The foundations of the operation are evident within the East Local Policing Area and build on good practices seen in other Police forces notably the City of London Police. The operation is a multi-agency approach which include collaboration with GDAS, Wallich, Pobl, Health and Local Authority housing associations.

Essentially, the operation looks at supporting people who are begging and rough sleeping. Through partnership working we aim to understand the cause, support the individual as much as possible and address their needs. To ensure a consistent approach across Gwent Police, the West Local Policing Area will adopt a similar approach. This work will be incorporated into their action plan under Safer Communities.

In terms of investigations, just some examples from our local teams include:

In response to an increase in crime and ASB with Blaenau Gwent six youth were identified as being responsible for twenty-one separate offences. These six youths are now subject to YOS or court processes with the Local Authority pursuing a civil injunction. Problem solving, partnership work and interventions have resulted in a significant reduction in crime and ASB.

An investigation into a serious sexual assault that left an elderly victim with significant injuries. The suspect fled to the north of England to avoid arrest. Through an intelligence led operation the suspect was located, arrested



and returned to Gwent Police. Detectives charged the individual and remanded them in custody whilst awaiting trial.

Synergy between uniform officers, proactive and serious organised crime teams has seen some outstanding results at court. Four individuals have received a collective custodial term of thirteen years for being concerned in the supply of cocaine. A separate investigation has seen a suspect jailed for ten years for robbery and possession of bladed article.

## 2.9 **Operational Support**

Policing the road networks of Gwent is vital to our crime reduction strategy. We will deny offenders the use of our roads by building upon the work of the Roads Policing Specialist Operations team and keep people safe through the Wales Road Casualty Reduction Partnership and initiatives such as Operation Snap and Operation Utah.

Operation Utah continues to target illegal vehicles throughout the whole of Gwent. During National County Lines Intensification week one vehicle was stopped containing £36,000 in cash and designer clothes worth £10,000. Searches at associated addresses recovered significant quantities of drugs.

The Roads Policing Specialist Operations are omnicompetent often having to respond to a variety of incidents. Officers have provided critical medical support to a female found collapsed. Through their calmness and co-ordination they were able to stabilise her condition by immediate CPR and the use of a defibrillator. These actions have saved her life.

Collaboratively working with Regional Organised Crime Units has seen the team stop vehicles and arrest offenders. Cash seizures in excess of £60,000 and drugs valued at £200,000 have been seized. These are significant interventions to prevent the supply of drugs into the communities of Gwent.

## 2.10 **Organised Crime**

Our relentless determination to respond to serious and organised crime continues to yield outstanding successful operations including:

Operation Airbrush has now concluded. This focussed on a drug supply line from Liverpool into Newport. The operation culminated in an enforcement day that involved searches at ten addresses resulting in eighteen arrests, the seizure of forty kilos of amphetamine and £200,000 worth of jewellery. The principal offender was also subject of a separate operation and was responsible for supplying heroin and cocaine. In January this year they were sentenced to 12 years imprisonment. HHJ Petts commented that the prosecution team were to be commended for their thorough investigation.



In December Operation Beechway saw the principal suspect sentenced to 10 years 6 months for their role in the conspiracy to supply of cocaine and amphetamine. They also received a consecutive sentence for unlicensed dog breeding and mutilation.

## 2.11 **Modern Day Slavery (MDS) and Exploitation teams**

Our MDS team continue to deliver excellent results and strive to safeguard some of the most vulnerable people within our communities. Several investigations continue in relation to sexual exploitation, drugs supply and the exploitation of vulnerable adults.

The 'Cuckoo Watch' is firmly embedded within the organisation to protect vulnerable people from Organised Crime Groups exploiting them and their home. Partnership working with Housing Associations plays an essential part to identify safeguarding concerns.

Our Heroin and Crack Action Area Coordinator has been instrumental in providing a trigger plan in response to increased reports of spiking or spiking by injection documented in the media. The plan has been devised to provide support and guidance to front line officers responding to these reports. The plan will ensure the victim's health and welfare is prioritised whilst also ensuring key evidence is secured.

## 2.12 **Financial Crime**

Our Financial Investigation Unit continue to prevent criminals access to their gains whilst implementing safeguarding interventions to support the vulnerable.

During the month of November the unit processed:

- 18 cash detentions totalling £264,718.00
- 14 forfeitures totalling £143,339.33.
- 60 safeguarding interventions resulting in £161,996.00 refunded to victims.

The unit has supported many ongoing investigations with some significant results. Two individuals have been prosecuted for drug related offences where £50,000 was recovered having been concealed in a mattress. The cash was forfeited as the individuals were unable to evidence the funds came from legitimate means.

The team have worked closely with staff at local banks throughout Gwent to provide fraud awareness inputs. The aims of this collaboration is to identify areas of commonality between our respective organisations and to improve communication / understanding. Our drive to continually improve



will highlight better preventative measure and safeguard members of the public from financial crime.

## 2.13 **Cybercrime and Police Online Investigation Team**

Our Police Online Investigation Team (POLIT) focuses on protecting vulnerable people online and target those involved in the viewing and distribution of indecent images of children.

During November the Digital Forensic Unit were subject to a reaccreditation audit by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS). It focused on 3 areas: Quality Management Systems (QMS), Technical (T) and Information Security (IS). The outcome confirmed Gwent continued to be complaint and were recommended for retention of accreditation status.

In December CPS authorised charges relating to theft and fraud of cryptocurrency. The defendant stole a physical cryptocurrency wallet before converting and spending a currency valued at £19,373.35. This was the first Cryptocurrency Investigation by Gwent Police and involved significant technical analysis to secure the level of detailed evidence required to secure these charges.

## 2.14 **Major Crime**

The Major Incident Team have been influential in response to serious, complex and protracted offences reported.

In December the team investigated two murders. The first being an incident in Trelleck, Monmouthshire where a person was found deceased at the scene. Enquiries are progressing to determine the cause of death.

The second investigation involved the victim being assaulted within his caravan and then set alight. He died as a result of his injuries from the fire. The suspect has been charged with murder and is due to stand trial in June

We have seen the recent conclusion of Operation Lupin, the domestic related murder of Linda Maggs. Following a trial the jury found her husband to be guilty murder. He is scheduled to be sentenced on February 17th 2022.

## 2.15 **Corporate Communications**

Over the past quarter the Corporate Communications team has secured positive coverage for our work including the bravery awards for the team responding to the water buffalo incident in 2020, and the sentencing of 10 individuals as part of a serious and organised crime case which concluded in January under Op Empire.





We also worked with a survivor of domestic abuse to encourage others to come forward and report their experiences in the run up to the Christmas period securing coverage with Wales Online.

A great deal of support was in place to secure coverage through social media and traditional media for our recruitment campaigns for police officers in the early part of 2022, including targeted approaches to engage different demographics through social media.

We worked with the We Don't Buy Crime Team and Crackit Productions to film for the Channel 5 series Pickpockets, Scammer and Thieves. The first contributions from the force appeared late January, with more schedule over the coming weeks.

## 2.16 **People Services and Learning and Development**

On January 4<sup>th</sup> 2022, 49 probationers successful started. Our last intake for year two of uplift is planned for March 2022 to fulfil our establishment numbers and achieve uplift for year two.

The recruitment pipeline is looking healthy for the start of year three and plans are in place to increase the size of the July 2022 intake to place us in a good position at the start of year three.

We have continued to increase the number of community support officers and have a further intake planned for March 2022. These 25 officers will bring us in line with the increase of funding from Welsh government. A further campaign is planned for February to ensure we have the candidate pool for two intakes in 2022.

We have developed a year-round campaign for Specials and have 16 new specials starting in February 2022.

Our work to promote a representative workforce continues. As part of the 'safe to say' campaign our data quality for protected characteristics has improved considerably and the number of unknowns significantly decreased. As a result, we have a better understanding of our workforce.

The positive action team now have an embedded business as usual supportive action programme where we are seeing real successes.

The number of ethnic minority officers has increased from 34 (April 2021) to 47 (February 2022) which is a 38% increase. We are also continuing to increase the number of non-British officers (white other). This is supporting engagement with other community groups and other language skills.



We have worked with GEMMA and rolled out a 'Positive Steps' mentoring programme. We have 10 existing officers from ethnic minorities now being mentored.

Gwent Police were awarded with a Level 3 Disability Confident Leader award in November. Very few forces have achieved this and we are the only Welsh force to have this award.

The wellbeing team have completed a number of key activities during this period. Notable successes include:

- Imbedded dyslexia screening process into all new starter inductions,
- Men's Health Network launch and ongoing support activities with network,
- Hosted Winter Wellbeing event – with guest speakers around the topics of mindfulness, personal resilience in the face of adversity, teaching us about our mental health, managing our day-to-day life and challenges we experience and educating staff to make positive choices around their own health and wellbeing,
- Endometriosis consultation group initiated with a view to support being launched February 2022.

### 3. EQUALITIES & HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 This report has been considered against the general duty to promote equality, as stipulated under the Joint Strategic Equality Plan and has been assessed not to discriminate against any particular group.
- 3.2 In preparing this report, consideration has been given to requirements of the Articles contained in the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998.

### 4. RISK

- 4.1 None

### 5. PUBLIC INTEREST

- 5.1 In producing this report, has consideration been given to 'public confidence'? **Yes**
- 5.2 Are the contents of this report, observations and appendices necessary and suitable for the public domain? **Yes**



5.3 If you consider this report to be exempt from the public domain, please state the reasons: N/A

## **6. REPORT AUTHOR**

6.1 Insp Matthew Edwards

## **7. LEAD CHIEF OFFICER**

7.1 Chief Constable Pam Kelly

## **8. ANNEXES**

8.1 None

## **9. CHIEF OFFICER APPROVAL**

9.1 I confirm this report has been discussed and approved at a formal Chief Officers' meeting.

9.2 I confirm this report is suitable for the public domain

**Signature:**



**Date: 14.02.22**

